

SIXTEEN
SERMONS

UPON
Select Subjects.

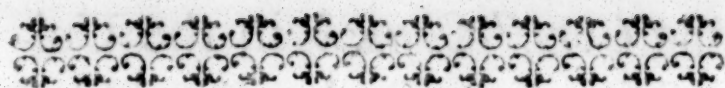
BY THE
Reverend ISAAC TERRY, A. M.
*Late Rector of the United Parishes of
St. Mary Bredman and St. Andrew
in the City of Canterbury.*

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P R E F A C E

The Author of the follow-
ing Discourses was born in
the City of Cambridge, and
educated in the Grammar School
there, founded by King Henry the
8th. Being thoroughly instruc-
ted in the Learned Languages,
and such other Parts of Litera-
ture as are usually taught in
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that

P R E F A C E.

that Celebrated House of Learning *Christ-Church* in the University of *Oxford*. His eldest * Brother was at that Time an eminent Tutor there; under whose Care he was admitted a Commoner in the Year 1707. As his Natural Endowments were good, and his Industry very great, He soon made a considerable Improvement in the whole Circle of Human Learning. Having taken two Degrees in Arts, and being ordained a Deacon *A. D.* 1714, he returned to his Native City; where, his ill Health not permitting

* The Rev. *Thomas Terry*. afterwards D. D. Canon of *Christ Church*, and King's Professor of Greek in the University of *Oxford*.

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mitting him to engage in any Parochial Cure, he pass'd the nine following Years in great Retirement. But during *that* Interval his Time was most usefully employ'd in such Studies as are requisite to form the Character of a Compleat Divine; I mean the Holy Scriptures, and the Writings of the Primitive Fathers, with which he was much conversant; as indeed he could read them in their Original Languages with equal Ease and Pleasure. In the Year 1723 he was ordain'd Priest, and officiated at *Chartham* near *Canterbury* the remainder of *that* and the two following Years.

In

PREFACE.

In the Year 1729 he was, without any Application of his own, presented to the Rectory of *Iron-Aston* in the Diocese of *Gloucester*; but this he quitted in the end of the Year 1735, upon being collated to the United Livings of *St. Mary Bredman* and *St. Andrew* in the City of *Canterbury*. After a long and gradual Decay of Nature, he departed this Life Dec. 9th. 1744, in the 55th Year of his Age. He was a Person of unaffected Piety, great Probity and strict Virtue. It is well known to all who remember him with what Fidelity he discharg'd the Duties of the Pastoral

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toral Office whilst his Health permitted him, and how universally he had acquir'd the Character of a solid and useful Preacher. And it is chiefly in Compliance with the Request of several who heard them, that these Discourses are now offered to the Publick; to which perhaps more may be added, if these meet with a favourable Reception.

ERRATA.

PAGE 51. line 26. for *judiciously* read
judicially.

P. 86. l. 11. r. Conquerors.

P. 194. l. 13. dele *at.*

P. 224. l. 22. r. *shall not set.*

l. 24. r. *nor claim.*

l. 25. r. *nor pretend.*

P. 389. l. 24. r. *fastest.*

Several Errors there are in the Pointing,
which the Reader is desir'd to correct.

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SERMON I.

THE gradual Advances of Religious
Knowledge.

ISA I. XI. 9. the latter Part.

*The Earth shall be full of the Knowledge
of the Lord, as the Waters cover the
Sea.*

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Canterbury School Tract.

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The Gospel a Means of Salvation.

I COR. I. 21. latter Part.

*It pleased God by the Foolishness of Preach-
ing to save them that believe.*

C O N T E N T S.

The whole Verse runs thus.

For after that, in the Wisdom of God, the World by Wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the Foolishness of Preaching to save them that believe. P. 23.

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Of the Exaltation of Christ.

PHIL. ii. 9, 10, 11.

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name which is above every Name:

That at the Name of Jesus every Knee should bow, of Things in Heaven, and Things in Earth, and Things under the Earth;

And that every Tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.

P. 152.

SERMONS VII, VIII.

A Discourse concerning the Perpetuity of Christ's Kingdom.

Being the Substance of two Sermons on that Subject.

1 COR. xv. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28.

Then cometh the End, when he shall have deliver'd up the Kingdom to God, even

a 2

the

the Father; when he shall have put down all Rule, and all Authority and Power. For he must reign, till he hath put all Enemies under his Feet. The last Enemy that shall be destroyed, is Death. For he hath put all Things under his Feet. But when he saith all Things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted which did put all Things under Him. And when all Things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto Him that put all Things under Him, that God may be all in all. P. 184.

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I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter Day upon the Earth.

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*And tho' after my Skin, Worms destroy
this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see
God.*

*Whom I shall see for my self, and mine
Eyes shall behold, and not another;
tho' my Reins be consum'd within me.*

P. 232.

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that Subject.*

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*He answered and said unto them, Because
it is given unto you to know the Mys-
teries of the Kingdom of Heaven.*

P. 261.

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GAL. IV. 4, 5.

*When the Fulness of Time was come, God
sent forth his Son, made of a Woman,
made*

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*made under the Law; to redeem them
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able Men, such as fear God, Men of
Truth, hating Covetousness; and place
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ands, and Rulers of Hundreds, Rulers
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CHAPTER X

S E R M O N I.

The gradual Advances of Religious Knowledge.

ISAIAH xi. 9. the latter Part.

The Earth shall be full of the Knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea.

WHEN Man was first created, SERM.
I. there was infus'd into him a divine Principle of Knowledge, by the Direction of which he might attain to that State of Perfection and Immortality to which he was design'd. This inestimable Grace he quickly forfeited by thirsting after prohibited Knowledge, the Fruit of which was Death to himself and to his Posterity.

THAT the whole Race of Mankind might not be irrecoverably lost for want
B of

— of salutary Knowledge, God did in after
 SERM. Ages vouchsafe to select Persons, the
 I. Gift of his holy Spirit; by which they
 — were not only illuminated themselves,
 but enabled to give Light to others, and
 to guide their Feet into the Way of
 Peace.

THAT God made Discoveries of his Will in this manner to his own People the *Jews*, is generally known and confess'd. And the most antient Christian Writers doubted not to affirm, that He, who is the God of the Gentiles as well as of the *Jews*, sent to the Gentiles also Prophets of their own, to reclaim them from the Error of their Ways, and bring them back to himself. But Prophecy among the Gentiles was very rare. The *Jews* only enjoy'd a continual Succession of Prophets; and for many Ages the Knowledge of the true God was in a manner confin'd to that Nation, among whom he had fix'd his Residence.

IN the Text the Prophet *Isaiab* foretells a wonderful Increase of religious Knowledge; — that a Time should
 come,

come, when it should overflow the Banks
which had hitherto confin'd it, and
spread itself over the whole habitable
World. *The Earth* (in the Version of
the *Seventy* it is, Ἡ οὐμνη, the whole
Earth) *shall be full of the Knowledge of*
the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea.

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I.

At what Time, and by what Degrees
and Means this Prediction was accom-
plished, I shall in the following Discourse
endeavour briefly to shew.

Now the full Completion of this Pro-
phesy undoubtedly belongs to the Times
of the Messiah. But in order to it divine
Providence seems to have taken several
preparatory Steps, some Ages before the
Incarnation of our blessed Lord. The
Rising of the Sun of Righteousness was
preceded by a Dawn, the Light of which
was considerable, tho' not comparable to
that of the perfect Day.

SOME hundreds of Years before the
Birth of Christ, the Light of Nature, af-
ter a long Night, began to shine forth;
and several Persons in the heathen World,
mov'd perhaps by an heavenly Impulse,

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set themselves to make a diligent Enquiry into the Principles and Duties of natural Religion, and to make them known to others; that by their Instructions and Exhortations they might reform the Lives and Manners of Men. Above all the rest, *Socrates* distinguish'd himself by his open and indefatigable Zeal in carrying on this glorious Work. Instruction and Reproof were the Employment of his Life; and at length it was given him to dye for the Testimony which he bare against the Superstitions and Corruptions of the Age in which he liv'd. After his Death the same Design was pursued by some of his Followers, but with more Caution and Reserve; lest, treading too near in the Steps of their Master, they also should meet with his Fate.

THE Systems of Morality and Religion deliver'd by these Men, tho' they want not their Errors and Imperfections, must yet be allow'd to contain many Things agreeable to the Dictates of right Reason, and whatsoever is agreeable to right Reason,

son,

son, is truly from the Father of Lights; the Author and Fountain of Reason, as well as of Revelation. Wherefore some of the most antient Writers of the Church have ventur'd to affirm (what is to be cautiously and candidly understood) That those among the Heathen, who liv'd and taught others to live according to Reason, were in some sort Christians; That they were in some measure partakers of the divine Logos, the Light which enlighteneth every Man that cometh into the World; That Philosophy was not only a divine Gift, but the Covenant of God with the Gentiles, and a School-mistress to bring them unto Christ.

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THESE Expressions will appear the more tolerable, if it be considered that there is great Reason to believe that the Grecian Philosophers had some other Light than that of Nature to guide their Enquiries; since in their Writings there are found the Traces of some Truths, which seem to be beyond the Discovery of human Reason. And in many Instances the likeness of their Notions and

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Expressions to the Doctrines and Words of Scripture, directs us to conjecture that they were originally deriv'd from thence.

THAT *Plato* in particular borrow'd very many Things from *Moses*, was plainly own'd by *Numenius* in that famous Saying of his, *What is Plato, but Moses Atticising?* Perhaps in his Travels he had convers'd with some Persons acquainted with the inspir'd Writers; or perhaps he himself was no Stranger to them, tho' he did not think fit publickly to own his Knowledge of them. And indeed it is exceeding probable that both he and some others of the Philosophers had read them, if that be true which is reported by *Aristobulus* an Hellenistical Writer, that there was extant a Greek Translation of the Books of *Moses* before the Times of *Alexander* and the Persian Empire.

BUT the most famous Version of the Scriptures was that which was made after this by the *Seventy* in the Reign of *Ptolemy Philadelphus*. This Version obtain'd so great Reputation, that for a long Time the Authors of it were thought to have been

of Religious Knowledge.

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been inspir'd. It quickly came to be read publickly in the Synagogues by the *Jews*; great Numbers of whom were settled in almost all civiliz'd Countries of the World. Thus the Treasuries of divine Knowledge were unlock'd, and set open to the Gentiles; the Cities of *Egypt* began to speak the Language of *Canaan*, and they gave Glory to *the Lord God of Israel in the Isles of the Sea.*

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If. xxiv.
15.

The Translation of the *Septuagint* was afterwards in no less Esteem among the Christians. It was constantly us'd by them, and did them great Service in their Controversies with the *Jews*. For it having been made by *Jews* near three hundred Years before the Birth of Jesus Christ, it was a very unexceptionable Evidence for the Christians against the false Glosses of the *Jews*, and the Corruptions which they were endeavouring to bring into the sacred Text itself. The Errors which are found even in this celebrated Translation are a convincing Proof that the Translators were under no infallible Direction. Yet it must be acknowledg'd

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that the publishing at this Time to the World the divine Oracles, in a Language the most universally understood, was very Providential, and that great and excellent Purposes were serv'd by it. There was rais'd in the World an Expectation of the promis'd Messiah, and Men were in some degree prepar'd for the Reception of Him; and effectual Provision was made for transmitting to the Gentile Nations the Jewish Scriptures, entire and free from any material Alterations or Corruptions.

As the Times of the Messiah drew nigh, the Prophecies concerning him were more generally and clearly understood, both by the *Jews* and pious Profelytes, who came over to them from the Gentiles. Then probably came abroad the Verses which were known by the Name of the Sibylline Oracles, and which are still extant under that Name; together with large Additions of a later Date. The Matter of them for the most part seems plainly to have been taken from the holy Scriptures. They contain'd, besides
 Predic-

Predictions, many principal Doctrines of
 natural and reveal'd Religion; severe SERM.
 Reprehensions of the Polytheism, Super- I.
 stitions and Immoralities of the Heathen,
 and earnest Exhortations to Repentance
 and Amendment. What *Virgil* trans-
 crib'd from them into his 4th Eclogue,
 written before the Time of our Lord's
 Nativity, sufficiently proves that they
 were earlier than Christianity, and conse-
 quently no Forgery of the Christians;
 and that they were well known, and in
 the Hands of those to whom they were
 address'd. And indeed they made so
 remarkable an Impression on the Minds
 of many People, that it was thought pro-
 per to prohibit the Reading them under
 the Pain of Death. And this, saith
Justin Martyr, was brought to pass by
 the Power of wicked Demons, that they
 might deter Men from acquiring the
 Knowledge of good Things, and keep
 the World in Bondage to themselves.
 But in this, he tells us, the Devils miss'd
 of their Aim; for the Christians without
 Fear both read these Books themselves,
 and

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and offered them to the Perusal of Unbelievers. For there being in these prophetic Books many Predictions relating to the Person and Kingdom of the Messiah, some of which were rather more explicit and particular than those in the holy Scriptures, the Reading them did mightily dispose Men to embrace Christianity. Wherefore the first Christians set a very high Value upon them, and on all Occasions appeal'd to their Testimony. For which reason some gave them the Name of *Sibyllists*.

THE low and suffering Condition of the Messiah while he was upon Earth, very much discourag'd Men from embracing his Doctrine, and making open Profession of it. Wherefore during the Time of his publick Ministry, his Followers were very few. But when he was risen from the Dead, and ascended up into Heaven, and the Truth of these Facts was publicly attested by those who had been Eye-witnesses of them, and were enabled to confirm their Testimony by many and unquestionable Miracles; Then

Men

Mens Prejudices began to vanish; the Correspondency of the Events with the Predictions was clearly seen and confess'd, and the Word of God grew mightily and prevail'd. It could not be long contained within the narrow Bounds of *Judæa*. The Voice of its Preachers quickly went into all Lands, and their Words unto the Ends of the World. The Gospel, like Light, shone from the *East* even unto the *West*, and immediately filled all Places with its Rays. The Kingdom of Heaven was at the beginning like a Grain of Mustard Seed, the least of all Seeds; but it quickly grew and waxed a great Tree, and shot forth great Branches, so that People of all Nations and Languages lodg'd themselves under the Shadow of it. Within the space of one Age it overspread the Face of the Earth. In all Countries of the then known World it was planted, as there is good Reason to believe, either by the Hand of an Apostle, or by some Companion of the Apostles.

THE Founders of the several Sects of Philosophy, neither in their Lives time

SERM.

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I.

nor after their Deaths, had ever any very considerable Number of Followers. Indeed the generality of Mankind understood neither the meaning of their Terms, nor the force of their Reasonings. Only Men of Parts and Learning were qualified for the Studying their Books, and benefiting by them. But Christianity drew over vast multitudes of Converts of all Ranks and Conditions. Scarce a Century had pass'd after the Death of the Apostles, when the Court, the Camp, the Senate, Town and Country, all Places but the Idol-Temples were over-run with Christians. The Doctrine of the Gospel was of the most important Concernment to all; wherefore the wise and good God levell'd it to the Capacities of all, that all might understand it, and receive the Benefit of it.

SOME very concerning and necessary Doctrines of Religion the Philosophers were wholly ignorant of. Others they understood very imperfectly, and discours'd of them very obscurely and doubtfully. These the Christians of all Ranks well

well understood, and upon sure Grounds yielded an undoubting Assent to them. Even the Illiterate among the Christians were far superior in Knowledge of divine Things to the chief and most celebrated Philosophers. Husbandmen and Artificers, the Bond-men and Bond-women, were able to speak of the most sublime and important Truths with more clearness and certainty than *Socrates* or *Plato*.

OF those who apply'd themselves to the Study of Philosophy, very few regulated their Conduct by it. It was commonly look'd upon by them as a pleasant and honourable Amusement, as an ornamental and fashionable Accomplishment, as an Exercise and Trial of Mens Abilities, as a Subject of Discourse and Disputation, rather than as a Rule of Life. So that the main End of Philosophy was hardly in any degree attain'd. The generality of those who profess'd it, deny'd in Works what in Words they pretended to know. But the Knowledge of the first Christians stopp'd not in Speculation, but carried them on to a suitable practice.

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It had a sensible and remarkable Effect upon their Tempers and Manners. They liv'd as they taught ; not only their Discourses, but their Examples were instructive. They contented not themselves with drawing beautiful Pictures of Virtue, but shew'd to the World Virtue it self alive. In them Knowledge had its perfect Work ; the genuine Fruits of it were visible in their Conversation, and evidently shew'd that it had taken deep Root in their Minds.

Who ever so far credited *Socrates*, as to follow his Example in dying for the Truths which he asserted ? But for the Doctrine of Jesus Christ an innumerable Army of Martyrs laid down their Lives, rejoicing that they were thought worthy to be made like to the Captain of their Salvation. No Age, no sort nor condition of Men declin'd the glorious Combat ; many even of the weaker Sex voluntarily offered themselves to it. The Gospel was not a Light without Heat ; it not only illuminated the Understandings, but warmed the Hearts of its Professors.

feffors. The firm Assurance they had of
the Truth and Divinity of it, animated
them to endure all Extremities for it.
For they had a clear View of that im-
mortal Life, which till the Gospel ap-
pear'd was not perfectly brought to light.
And their Knowledge was salutary ; suf-
ficient to bring them to that supernatural
State of Happiness, to which Man was
originally ordain'd, and which was not
to be regain'd by Philosophy.

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I.

THUS the Knowledge of the Lord fil-
led the Earth. It was suddenly diffus'd
thro' all Countries of the known World,
and communicated to great numbers of
Persons of all forts and conditions. More
divine Truths were discover'd than for-
merly ; and those which had been before
discover'd were known more clearly and
certainly, and the Knowledge of them
effectually answer'd the Ends for which
it was design'd. It operated powerfully
upon Mens Dispositions and Manners,
and conducted them to a State of endless
Felicity.

CHRIS-

SERM.

I.

CHRISTIANITY at its first setting out made its way in the World without the assistance of human Learning. The first Publication and Reception of it were evidently owing to Miracle, that Mens Faith might not stand in human Wisdom, but in the Power of God. Yet it cannot be denied but that afterwards Learning contributed much to the Support and Increase of it.

MANY of the Fathers of the primitive Church were great Masters of human Learning, and did excellent Service to their Religion by it. Many Histories related in the Bible were confirm'd by parallel Citations from the most antient Pagan Historians. Many Doctrines of Scripture objected against by the Heathens of those Times, were shewn to have been own'd by those Writers whom they most approv'd of and admir'd. The Scriptures themselves were early translated into all Languages, that the People of every Nation might read and hear in their native Tongue the Word of God, the unerring Rule of Faith and Manners.

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The great Antiquity of the Sacred Books, and the comparative Lateness of the Pagan Authors were demonstrated; the Absurdity and abominable Impiety of the Pagan Theology and Worship were expos'd; the Defects and Errors of the most celebrated Poets and Philosophers among the Gentiles were laid open; the vain Deceit of that Philosophy and Science, which were falsely so called, was detected, that Men might not be spoil'd by it; the Judgments of Men were convinc'd by clear and sound Reasonings, and their Affections gain'd by the most moving Perswasions and Exhortations. Such were the Uses which the antient Doctors of the Church serv'd by their Acquaintance with the Heathen Historians, Poets, Orators and Philosophers; by their Skill in Chronology, in Languages, and in the Arts of Reasoning and Elocution. Thus was profane Learning hallow'd, and made instrumental to the maintaining and propagating the holy Doctrine of the Gospel.

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TRUE it is, that Learning has been sometimes employ'd to fight against that holy Doctrine. Yet that it is in itself far from being an Enemy to it, is evident from hence; that by the Help of it, not only the best and holiest Persons have been far more useful to the Church of God, than they could otherwise have been; but also wicked and irreligious Men have been sometimes very serviceable to the Cause of Religion. Some, who have done the Works of the Devil, have by their Learning promoted the Knowledge of the Lord.

THE Primitive Christians being very sensible of the great Usefulness of Learning of all kinds, human as well as divine; that the Church might have sufficient Supplies of it, had not only Catechetical Schools, in which the Doctrines of the Gospel were explain'd and confirm'd; but also Schools of Grammar, Rhetoric and Philosophy; the Masters of which were sometimes Men of great Eminence and Reputation for Learning. *Origen*, before he was Catechist, taught Grammar

at

at *Alexandria*; and when he presided over the Catechetical School, he introduc'd many of his Scholars to the Study of the Sciences and Philosophy, affirming that the Knowledge of them conduc'd to the right understanding of the Scriptures. For which Reason he said he thought it necessary for himself to be well vers'd in them.

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IN the same City *Origen's* Master *Ammonius Saccas* profess'd Philosophy. Heathens as well as Christians frequented his Lectures; and from his School were deriv'd the Improvements which were made in the Platonic Philosophy by the later Platonists; several of whom had been his Hearers. And on the other hand, the Christians, rather than their Youth should want Instruction in the liberal Arts and Sciences, or not have the best, were content that they should receive it from unbelieving Masters. The great *Basil* and *Chrysostom* laid the Foundation of their inimitable Eloquence under *Himerius* and *Libanius*, the most noted Sophists of their Time, but bitter Enemies to Christianity.

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THE Emperor *Julian* being minded to extirpate the Christian Religion, provided by Law that the Children of the *Galileans* should not be instructed in Grammar, or Rhetoric, or Philosophy, nor taught the Greek Poets or Orators. For he thought that the Prevalence of the Gospel was in a great measure owing to this, That the Heathen were shot with Arrows wing'd with their own Feathers, and overcome with Arms with which they themselves had furnished the Christians. Wherefore if he could once disarm the Christians of the Weapons which they had borrow'd from their Adversaries, he hop'd it would be no hard matter to prevail against them.

AND indeed it is observable, that in fact Christianity and Learning have generally flourish'd and decay'd together. At how low an ebb they both have long been in the Eastern Countries is well known. It is well known too, how grossly Christianity was imbas'd and corrupted during the Times of Ignorance in the Western Church; and that a principal

pal Means of restoring True Religion in these Parts, was the revival of good Literature. That Religion which was at first wonderfully propagated thro' the World in opposition to Learning, did afterwards prevail more and more by the Help of it; and hath declin'd where-ever it hath been destitute of its Support. Miraculous Powers did for some time more than compensate for the want of it. But when those Powers which supplied the room of it grew less frequent, and at length ceased, it became not only of great Use, but necessary to the Well-being and Prosperity of the Church.

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I.

So that the Encouragement of Learning [* the Design which now calls us together] hath a direct Tendency to promote the Interests of Christianity, and to preserve and increase that Knowledge, the Preservation and Increase of which all must wish, who wish well to Mankind.

WHEREFORE may the Lord be with them who are employ'd in publishing the Word of Salvation; and with those

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also,

* Preached at *Canterbury School Feast.*

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I.

also, who, tho' they are not themselves engag'd in that honourable and beneficial Employment, are by their Bounty assisting to others in Qualifying themselves for it.

MAY the Success of this, and all other Designs of a like nature, be the abounding of Christian Knowledge; and may Christian Knowledge abound to the Extinguishing all our unhappy Divisions, and producing among us that mutual Amity and Agreement, which in the Verses immediately preceding my Text the Prophet foretells it should produce among its Professors, and which we are sure it actually did produce among the first Christians; that so not only Truth may flourish in our Land, but Peace may be extended to her as a River, and Glory as a flowing Stream, and her Righteousness may be as the Waves of the Sea.—

Which God of his infinite Mercy in his due Time grant unto us, for the Sake of our only Lord and Redeemer Jesus Christ. To whom, &c.

S E R M.

S E R M O N II.

The Gospel a Means of Salvation.

1 COR. I. 21. latter Part.

*It pleased God by the Foolishness of Preaching
to save them that believe.*

The whole Verse runs thus.

*For after that, in the Wisdom of God,
the World by Wisdom knew not God,
it pleased God by the Foolishness of
Preaching to save them that believe.*

TH E Apostle's Meaning in these
Words may be thus more at large
express'd. When by the All-wise and
over-ruling Providence of Almighty God
it came to pass, that the reputed wise
Men of the World by all their boasted

SERM.
II.

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II.

Learning and Philosophy did not attain to a true Knowledge of God, he was graciously pleas'd to rescue all who were willing to entertain the Truth, from a State of Ignorance and Error, of Sin and everlasting Misery, by the Publication of the Doctrine of the Gospel; which the Pretenders to Wisdom esteem'd absurd and incredible, and derided as Foolishness.

THE Text thus paraphras'd affords this Proposition for the Subject of my following Discourse, *viz.* That the Gospel is a proper and efficacious Means of Salvation to all who are sincerely dispos'd to embrace it.

IN order to the Gospel's being a proper and efficacious Means of Salvation, nothing more can be necessary than these four Things:

First, THAT the Matter or Doctrine of it be such as hath a direct Tendency to recover Men out of a State of Ignorance and Error, of Sin and Misery, and to advance them to a State of Happiness and Perfection.

Second-

Secondly, **THAT** there be unexceptionable Evidence of the Truth and Divinity of it.

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Thirdly, **THAT** there be sufficient Provision for the Publication of it. And,

Fourthly, **THAT** it be duly heard and received by those to whom it is published.

First then, **THE** Matter or Doctrine of the Gospel is manifestly such as hath a direct Tendency to recover Men from Ignorance and Error, from Sin and Misery; and to advance them to a State of Perfection and Happiness.

FOR, to make us sensible of our Danger, it informs us of our Degeneracy from that original Uprightness and Perfection in which Man was at first created, and that we are dead in Trespasses and Sins; whereby we have render'd ourselves liable to all the Evils which are naturally consequent thereupon, and obnoxious to the Wrath of an Almighty God, and to those Penalties which he may justly inflict upon those who have violated his Laws.

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TO reclaim us from those evil Courses by which we were reduc'd to this wretched Condition, it represents to us the indispensable Necessity of Repentance and Amendment for the future, in order to the Pardon of our past Miscarriages, and to our Reconciliation with God, and the regaining his Favour. It does likewise in the fullest and most authentic manner assure us of the Success and availableness of Repentance to these Purposes; of which (since Remission of Guilt is an Act of meer Grace, to which the Deity is not in strict Justice oblig'd) the Light of Reason cannot give us certain and satisfactory Assurance.

FOR the Right Information of our Understandings and Regulation of our Conduct, it hath clearly discover'd to us the Nature and Attributes of God, in what Way he desires to be worshipp'd, what Offices and Services are acceptable to him, and what kind of Behaviour not only to himself, but to our Neighbour and with regard to our own Persons, he requires. It hath impos'd upon us Laws
every

every way agreeable to the Dictates of
uncorrupt Reason, and perfective of hu-
man Nature. It hath made those Virtues
and Graces the Conditions of our Happi-
ness, which are in themselves manifestly
conducive to it, and the necessary Pre-
paratives and Qualifications for it. What-
soever Things are true, whatsoever Things
are honest, whatsoever Things are just,
whatsoever Things are pure, whatsoever
Things are lovely, whatsoever Things
are of good Report, if there be any Vir-
tue, and if there be any Praise, all these
Things it hath very plainly and strictly
enjoyn'd. And it hath neither^d enjoyn'd
nor allow'd any Thing of a different
Character. By comprehending whatso-
ever truly wise and good Precepts are
dispersedly deliver'd in the Writings of
the Philosophers, without the mixture of
any Thing erroneous or faulty, from an
Alloy of which the moral Documents of
no Philosophers are entirely free; by
greatly improving many Things which
had been very imperfectly taught in
their Schools; and by adding others of
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great Moment and Excellency, which are not to be found at all in their Systems, it hath rais'd our Duty to a much higher Pitch than any other Institution ever did. On which Accounts it alone is a perfect Rule of Life, the only unerring Guide in Matters of Duty.

EFFECTUALLY to engage us to set about the Work of Religion with Zeal and Vigour, and to persevere in the Prosecution of it, it hath promis'd the supernatural Assistances of the Divine Spirit, whereby we may be enabled to subdue our inordinate Appetites and Affections, to repel the Temptations of the Devil and the World, successfully to encounter the Difficulties of a religious Course, and to rise to the most exalted Heights of Holiness and Purity. It hath forewarn'd us of a Day of future Retribution, in which all shall render an Account of all their Actions, Words and Thoughts, and be judged according to them. And it hath brought to Light, Life and Immortality after this Life ended. Which important Principles of Religion, how

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demonstrable soever they may be by Reason, in Fact were not so evident even to the Best and Wisest among the Heathen, but that they sometimes express'd themselves with much Hesitancy, and Diffidence and Uncertainty concerning them.

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To animate our Hopes, it hath propos'd endless and inconceivable Felicity as the Reward of Obedience; than which a more forcible Motive cannot be offered to allure Men to their Duty.

To work on our Fears, it hath threatened to Disobedience intolerable and everlasting Torments; than which nothing more dreadful can be urg'd to restrain Men from offending.

Finally, For the Supplying what is totally wanting in Natural Religion, it further teaches us, that when Men were utterly destitute of all Means of recovering themselves from Ruin, the only begotten Son of God, the Lord mighty to save, did by Divine Appointment willingly interpose for their Deliverance. He who was God became Man, that
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dwelling among Men he might in Person call them back to God, and to the best Advantage instruct them in the whole Compass of their Duty, and might illustrate and enforce his Precepts by his own spotless and shining Example; and that being both God and Man, he might be a fit Representative of God to Men, and of Men to God, and be duly qualified to mediate between them both. He who was impassible became passible, that he might be capable of making Satisfaction, by suffering for Sin in the same Nature in which the Offence had been committed. He who was perfectly Innocent, voluntarily substituted himself in the Room of the Guilty; that by bearing the Punishment due to Sin in the stead of the Sinner, a Way might be made for the Sinner to escape. He, whose Blood was of incalculable Value, made his Soul a Sin-offering to expiate the Guilt of the whole human Race, and paid his Life a Ransom for a World of Criminals. He, who was nearest and dearest to the Almighty Father, by the Sacrifice of Himself appeas'd

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his Indignation, and restor'd us to his Favour; and having made Peace thro' the Blood of his Cross, he arose again from the Dead, and once for all entred into the most Holy Place, and sat down at the right Hand of his Father, by whom all Power is committed to him in Heaven and in Earth, and in whose Presence he continually appeareth for us as our High Priest and Advocate, and for ever liveth to make Intercession for us. Thro' him all good Things descend from God to us, and for his Sake, God is propitious to us and accepts our imperfect Services. Wherefore it is appointed that our Prayers and Thanksgivings and Adorations, in one word all our Religious Worship should thro' his Mediation be offer'd to the Deity.

By this Method of Redemption, as the Offender was spar'd; so the Authority of God's Government was maintain'd, and the Honour of his Laws vindicated. Justice was satisfied at the same time that divine Mercy was gloriously display'd. Sin was at once pardoned and discountenanced.

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tenanced. One and the same Proceeding manifested God's boundless Love to Sinners, and his high Displeasure against Sin. Even in granting an Indemnity to Sinners, all was done that could be done to imprint on their Minds a lasting Sense of the great Evil and Danger of Sin, to create in them the utmost Detestation of it, to convince them of the Necessity of renouncing it, and to deter them from ever returning to it.

ALL these great and useful Ends (not a few of which seem to interfere, and to be hardly reconcileable with each other) and possibly many others unknown to us, were equally serv'd by this wonderful Dispensation of the Incarnation, Sufferings and Death of the Mediator. Even this, which hath been from the beginning accounted the most exceptionable Part of the Christian Scheme, hath impress'd upon it very plain Marks of Divine Contrivance; which (however it may be ridicul'd by the Professors of human Wisdom as Foolishness) will ever be found to exceed all the Invention of Men.

Men. Nor can any thing be imagined better fitted, or more wisely calculated for the conducting Men to Happiness, than is the System of Christian Doctrines. The Particulars, of which it is compos'd, consider'd seperately, do all of them apparently aim at this End. And they do all correspond exactly with one another; and when put together do harmoniously and uniformly conspire to accomplish this grand and glorious Design.

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THE Fitness and Tendency of the Christian Doctrine to reform the Lives of Men, and to bring them to Happiness, is it self a strong Presumption, at least the best internal Evidence it can have, that it is True and came from God. But that Men might have no Pretence to reject the Gospel as a cunningly devis'd Fable, it pleas'd God to afford unexceptionable external Evidence of the Truth and Divinity of it; which was the

Second THING I mention'd as requisite to its being an effectual Means of Salvation.

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THE Miracles wrought by our blessed Saviour and his Followers in Confirmation of their Doctrine, were an infallible Demonstration of it, because they were the Attestation of God himself to it. They were generally Beneficial, and therefore worthy of God. They were such as were confessedly beyond human Power to effect. They were numerous, and of various Kinds. They were wrought, not by a few, but several Persons, and those of unblemish'd Characters, very frequently, for many Years, nay for several Ages together, very publickly, in very many Places, in Cities and Countries the most distant from each other, in the Presence not only of Friends but of Enemies; sometimes upon Enemies themselves, and to their Confusion or Conviction. All which Circumstances considered, there is no room for Suspicion of Imposture. Nor was the Reality of them denied or questioned by the antient Enemies of Christianity, who had the best Means of informing themselves concerning them. The Principal of them all

was the Resurrection of our Saviour himself from the Dead; of which there is such undeniable Evidence, as there is hardly of any other Fact long since past whatsoever; and which being prov'd, must be, and is allow'd to be, a most incontestable Proof of our Blessed Lord's Divine Mission.

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THEY who liv'd in the Times of Christ and his Apostles were themselves Eye-witnesses of these Miracles, or knew them by the Report of credible Eye-witnesses. To us who live since, the Knowledge of them has been convey'd by the Writings of our Lord's Apostles and Disciples, who must necessarily know whether what they related were true or no, and gave all possible Demonstrations of their Integrity and Veracity.

AND that these Writings are genuine and uncorrupt there is much better Evidence, than there is of the Genuineness and Uncorruptness of any other antient Books or Records whatsoever. We come at the Knowledge of all antient Facts by Testimony; and no Testimonies concer-

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ning any antient Facts whatever have been delivered down to us in so authentic a Way, and with so many and sure Marks of Credibility, as have the Testimonies concerning the Miracles of Christ and his Disciples, and the other Facts which are connected with them.

MOREOVER, The Conversion of the World to Christianity is to us a visible and standing Proof of the Truth of these Miracles, since it is altogether incredible that the Apostles and their Companions, not only without Learning or Eloquence, or Wealth or Authority or Force, but in Opposition to all these, and to the Errors and Lusts and Vices and Prejudices and Superstitions of all Mankind, under the greatest Discouragements and Pressures, should be able suddenly to spread the Christian Doctrine thro' all Nations and Languages of the Earth; had not the Lord vouchsafed to work with them, and to confirm the Word by Signs following. Since then even at this Distance of Time we have unexceptionable Evidence of those Miracles, by which the Truth

Truth and Divinity of the Gospel were infallibly demonstrated; it follows, that we have likewise unexceptionable Evidence of the Truth and Divinity of the Gospel.

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BUT the Gospel, how true soever it may be, can save none but those to whom it is known. Wherefore in order to its being an efficacious Means of Salvation, it is necessary,

Thirdly, THAT sufficient Provision be made for the due Publication of it.

OUR Lord himself during his Abode on Earth preach'd the Kingdom of God among his Countrymen the Jews; and after his Resurrection he commissioned his Apostles to go forth every where, and to make Disciples of all Nations. In the Execution of this Commission, They and their Companions and Scholars, tho' for the most part mean and illiterate Persons, succeeded to Admiration. By the Gift of Tongues they were on a sudden enabled to proclaim the glad Tidings of Salvation, and the Terms of it, in all the then known Regions of the Earth.

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— Their Teaching, it is true, was not with the enticing Words of Man's Wisdom; but inartificial, plain and familiar; without the Assistances and Ornaments of Learning and Elocution, accommodated to the Understandings of all. The Things which they taught were of universal Concernment; wherefore it was proper and needful that they should be made easy and clear to the Apprehensions of all. Their Persons, and their Doctrine and their Method of Teaching it, were by those who were highly conceited of their own Wisdom, treated with Contempt and Scorn. But the Event was, that incredible Numbers of all Sorts and Degrees of Men in all Places were soon reclaim'd from Idolatry and all manner of Vice, to the Worship of the One True God, and the Practice of Virtue.

ALL the Philosophers together were never able to make any considerable Progress in Reforming the World. Their Philosophy was for the most part very abstruse and remote from common Apprehensions,

prehensions, conceal'd under many Terms of Art, the distinct Meaning of which was not easily known, deduc'd by very subtil Reasonings, and perplex'd with many nice and intricate Questions, which were of little use in Morality, and of which the Vulgar were not competent Judges. Only Men of Parts and Learning, and a great deal of Leisure, were qualified for the Study of it. The rest, who are always by far the greatest Part of Mankind, had neither Abilities nor Opportunity to enquire into it. So that very few in comparison were, or possibly could be benefited by it. But what the Philosophers with all their Learning and Oratory, and Arts of Reasoning could not effect, *That* the simple Fishermen in Opposition to them accomplish'd at once, by what was called *the Foolishness of Preaching*; that it might appear, that the Religion which they taught was no Imposture, but of Divine Original; and that the Prevalence of it was owing to the Power of God, and not to the Wisdom of Men.

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MOREOVER, For the secure transmitting the Doctrine of the Gospel pure and entire to after Ages, the Apostles and Evangelists committed it to Writing, in the Books of the *New Testament*; wherein all Things necessary to be Believ'd in order to Salvation, together with the Duties of the Christian Religion, and the Motives by which they are enforced, are delivered with great Plainness indeed, in condescension to the meanest Capacities, but withal with that Solemnity, Weight and Authority, as are hardly to be met with in other Books, and cannot fail of making a deep Impression on all intelligent and sober-minded Persons. And they established a successive Order of Men, whose peculiar Business it should be to propagate the Religion which they planted, from Generation to Generation.

ON them it is incumbent to declare unto Mankind all the Counsel of God, and to keep back from them nothing that is profitable. To communicate to them the whole Body of saving Truths, not
 only

only entire, but uncorrupt and unmixt
with any thing that might hinder their
salutary Effect; to explain to them these
Things in a manner suitable to their Ca-
pacities; frequently to inculcate them up-
on those who already know them, and
to press them to an answerable Practice.
To persuade, to entreat, to exhort, to
encourage, to terrify, to admonish, to
warn, to charge and to testify. To sup-
port the Weak, to comfort the Feeble-
minded, to stir up the Drowsy and Neg-
ligent, to confirm the Irresolute and Un-
settled, to resolve Doubts, to remove Ob-
jections, to convince Gainfayers, and to
reprove and bring back those who are
out of the Way. To be constant and
diligent, and serious and earnest in doing
these Offices; to be instant in Season,
out of Season, with Meekness and long
Suffering, and with all Authority. Fi-
nally, to shine themselves as Lights in
the World, to guide them who are un-
der their Care by their Example as well
as by their Teaching, and to go before
them in the Way to Salvation.

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A WISER Provision than this could not have been made for the Publishing the Gospel, and the Compassing the Ends which it was design'd to serve. And if this excellent Institution hath not always been attended with all the Success which were to have been wished, and might have been reasonably expected; Woe be to them, whether Clergy or Layety, by whose Neglect or Fault this hath happen'd. For the Miscarriage cannot be charged on any Defect in the Institution it self. However, the Effects of it have always been very considerable. Great Multitudes are continually either preserv'd or gain'd over from Vice and Irreligion, or false Religion, and train'd to the true Knowledge of God, and at length brought to Salvation by it. It is notorious that to it principally is owing all the religious Knowledge and Practice in the World, which without it would quickly be at a very low Ebb. For which reason some are its Enemies; and all will ever be its hearty and steady Friends, who are Friends to Mankind.

Fourth.

Fourthly and lastly, IN order to the Gospel's being an efficacious Means of Salvation, it is necessary that it be duly heard and received by those to whom it is published. Otherwise in Vain are the Doctrines of the Gospel wisely designed and exactly fitted for that Purpose. In Vain hath God given Testimony to the Truth of it by the Seal of Miracles; and his Heralds make Proclamation of it in Vain. Tho' there be no Imperfection in the Doctrine it self; tho' nothing has been wanting on God's Part for its Confirmation; tho' there be no Failure in those whose Office it is to publish it; yet may it be defeated of its End thro' the Indisposition or Default of those to whom it is published; as there are some Soils which will mock the Toil and Skill of the Husbandman, and upon which the Best of Seed and the kindly Influences of Heaven will be lost.

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THE Art of Speaking hath always been much studied, and highly valued; and it deserves so to be; for without question it is of considerable Use both
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for Conviction and for Persuasion. But much more depends upon the Dispositions of the Hearers, than upon the Abilities or Art of the Speaker. Happy is he who speaks in the Ears of them that hear aright. His Discourse, if understood and supported by Truth and Reason, will not miss of Success, how artless and unadorned soever it be. But where the Minds of the Audience are not prepared for the Entertainment of the Truth; there Truth, tho' the strongest of all Things, will hardly be able to prevail; tho' the Preachers of it be ever so faithful and assiduous in the Discharge of their Function; tho' their Speech distill as the Dew, and the Words from their Lips flow sweeter than Honey. It therefore nearly concerns all who would not, by frustrating the Design of the Gospel, be the Authors of their own Ruin, to take Heed how they Hear.

THEY who are not yet convinc'd of the Truth of Christianity, ought to accept of such Proof of it as a Matter of this kind will admit of, and to be satisfied with

with such Evidence as they would judge to be satisfactory in all other Cases; and not to reject it for the Sake of some Difficulties which they may not be able clearly and fully to account for, nor to be staggered by every frivolous Cavil, if it appear that the Arguments for it do greatly out-weigh the Objections which are brought against it. For what is there in the World so certain and clear as to be clogg'd with no Difficulties, and against which nothing can be objected? On other Occasions, Men do readily determine their Assent in Favour of that Side of the Question, on which they are sure the Evidence vastly preponderates. And if in this Case only they do otherwise, this shews that they are under the Power of some prevalent Prejudice or Lust, or Interest, which will not suffer them to judge and act according to the Reason and Reality of Things.

MEN'S Vices and deprav'd Affections blind and bias their Understandings, and hinder them from discovering what is Right, and incline them to pass a wrong

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Judgment upon Things. They will hardly be brought to believe any thing contrary to their Wishes. In all probability the Ground of most Mens Disbelief of the Gospel is not the Insufficiency of its Evidence, but its Contrariety to their beloved Vices. It is an irreconcilable Enemy to their Practices, and therefore they will be Enemies to it. They are loth it should be true, wherefore they will not acknowledge it to be true.

It therefore greatly concerns every Enquirer into the Truth of the Christian Doctrine, to disengage himself from all evil Dispositions and Habits, which will be apt to set his Mind against it, and sincerely to practise whatsoever he already knows by the Voice of Reason to be his Duty; which will render him an equal and impartial Judge of Reveald Religion, and prepare him for the Reception of it. For saith our Saviour, *If any Man will do God's Will, he shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God.* But it is no wonder if they believe not the Truth, who have Pleasure

in Unrighteousness. For Men love Darkness rather than Light, because their Deeds are evil. For every one that doth evil hateth the Light, neither cometh to the Light, lest his Deeds should be reproved. But he that doth Truth cometh to the Light, that his Deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God.

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THE like Directions are needful to be observ'd by such Hearers also as are already firmly persuaded that the Christian Religion is a Divine Institution, and that the Books which we call the Scriptures are the Word of God himself. They ought to be willing to submit to Evidence, and to assent without Delay to whatsoever shall be proved to be agreeable to the Scriptures, the Divine Authority of which they confess, tho' it be not agreeable to their Prejudices or Interests, or Inclinations. It ought to be their sole Aim to discover what is true. They should have the Indifferency of Travellers; not chusing those Paths which they themselves like best, but honestly endeavouring to find out the right Way

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to Salvation, and steadfastly resolving to walk in it, be it ever so narrow and unpleasant.

THEY ought to free themselves from the Dominion of all vicious Appetites and Affections; the Influence of which will cloud and darken their Understandings, and lead them into fatal Errors. While their Lusts are predominant, they will greedily embrace Tenets which are favourable to them, and will give no Credence to a pure and holy Doctrine. They will believe that to be true, which they desire may be true; grounding their Opinions upon their Wishes, and not upon Reason, or the Authority of Divine Testimony. But they who have purg'd themselves from all inordinate Passions and Desires, and are not sway'd by any undue Views to present Pleasure or Advantage, are for that reason more capable of discerning Truth; They will judge of Doctrines equally and impartially, and are under no Temptation to yield their Assent to any thing that is false, or to withhold it from any thing that is true, because

because they have no other Concern nor Interest than to find out Truth.

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MOREOVER, they who would be profitable Hearers of the Word ought, to the utmost of their Power, to divest themselves of all Prejudice and Ill-will against the Preachers of it. They ought to consider not the Person, but the Arguments of the Speaker, and not to refuse salutary Instruction out of Disgust or Distast to him who offers it. If his Character be not altogether unblemish'd, or if he be an Enemy, they may be content to hear from him what may be for their Advantage, and to let him be an Instrument of their everlasting Salvation.

THEY ought not to be so puffed up with their Attainments in Knowledge, as to imagine that nothing remains unknown to them; nor so addicted to their own Opinions, as to be unwilling to hear what may be alledg'd against them; but dispos'd to alter their Judgments when there are good Reasons so to do. They who are confident that they are already compleatly instructed, and that

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they can never be in the Wrong, are not likely to be great Proficients, even with the best Helps and Means of Improvement, and under the ablest and most skilful Masters in the World. The proper Temper of Scholars is to be humble and modest, meek and submissive, sensible of their own Defects and Liableness to mistake, willing to learn and to be better inform'd, to be convinc'd of their Errors, and upon Conviction to relinquish and correct them. This honest and good Heart is that good Ground which yields Fruit, some thirty Fold, some sixty and some an hundred.

It is to be considered farther, That such is the Impotency and Corruption of our Faculties in our present State of Degeneracy, that in order to a saving Knowledge of the Gospel, it is requisite that the external Preaching of it should be accompanied with the internal Operations and Assistances of God's Holy Spirit. And Persons of that Temper, which I have been now recommending, are most susceptible of the Influences of Divine Grace,

Grace, and do easily yield to its Impressions, and are forward to cherish and obey its Motions. Wherefore God is ever ready to dispense it liberally to them according to his Promise. For, what Man is he that feareth the Lord? Him shall he teach in the Way that he shall chuse. The Meek will he guide in Judgment, and the Meek will he teach his Way. The Secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his Covenant. He, who resisteth the Proud, giveth Grace unto the Humble. *Mysteries are revealed unto the Meek*, saith the Son of Sirach; and he that keepeth the Law of the Lord,getteth the Understanding thereof. God will be found of them that tempt him not. But into a malicious Soul, Wisdom shall not enter, nor dwell in the Body that is subject unto Sin. For the Holy Spirit of Discipline will flee Deceit, and remove from Thoughts that are without Understanding, and will not abide when Unrighteousness cometh in. But God judiciously blinds those, who wilfully

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shut their Eyes against the Truth. To those who have Eyes to see and see not, and Ears to hear and hear not, He in return gives the Spirit of Slumber; Eyes that they should not see, and Ears that they should not hear; and hardens their Heart that they should not be converted, and be saved. When Men obstinately persist in chusing their own Ways, and their Soul delighteth in their Abominations; He also in his just Judgment will chuse their Delusions. When they abandon themselves to their Lusts and to all manner of Wickedness, He makes their Crime their Punishment; He withdraws from them the Restraints of his Grace, and leaves them to themselves; He gives them up to their own Hearts Lusts, to a reprobate Mind, *or a Mind void of Judgment*, as the Apostle expresses it; and sends them strong Delusions; that they who would not receive the Love of the Truth, should believe Lyes.

FROM all which it appears, that this Honesty and Probity of Mind, this sincere
and

and humble and teachable and obedient
Frame of Spirit, which I have been
speaking of, is a most necessary Prepa-
rative for the Understanding and Recep-
tion of Divine Truths, and the most
certain Preservative from dangerous Er-
rors in Religion.

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FURTHERMORE, That the Word of
Salvation may bring forth Fruit unto
everlasting Life, it ought to be heard
carefully and attentively. It must be
diligently mark'd, and considered and
treasur'd up in Memory. It must be
often recall'd to Mind, and from Time
to Time be the Subject of our Reflec-
tion and Meditation; that the Thoughts
of it may be familiar and habitual to us,
and constantly affect our Hearts; and
make such Impressions thereon, as can
never be worn away or defaced. Where-
fore the Scripture abounds with Precepts
and Exhortations to this purpose. *At-
tend unto my Words; incline thine Ear to
my Sayings. Let them not depart from
thine Eyes; keep them in the midst of
thine Heart. Forget not my Law; lay*

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up my Commandments with thee. Bind them upon thy Fingers; write them upon the Table of thine Heart. Ye shall lay up my Words in your Heart and in your Soul, and bind them for a Sign upon thine Hand, that they may be as Frontlets between thine Eyes. And ye shall teach them your Children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine House, and when thou walkest by the Way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up; and thou shalt write them upon the Door-posts of thine House, and upon thy Gates. My Son, if thou wilt, thou shalt be taught; and if thou apply thy Mind, thou shalt be prudent. If thou love to hear, thou shalt receive Understanding; and if thou bow thine Ear, thou shalt be wise. Let thy Mind be upon the Ordinances of the Lord, and meditate continually in his Commandments; He shall establish thine Heart, and give thee Wisdom at thine own Desire.

It was always a principal Care of those who excell'd in Oratory, to engage the Attention and Application of their Audience; without which, they were

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ſenſible, the moſt perſuaſive Eloquence would loſe its Force. And God himſelf has thought it no more than needful to call upon Men in numerous Places both of the *Old and New Teſtament* to hearken, to obſerve, to conſider and to remember. And indeed to whom ſhould we liſten, if not to *him*, who hath ſovereign Power over us and over all? If any other, ſurely *he* who planted the Ear may demand to be heard. Both the Authority of the Speaker, and the Importance of the Subject do exact of us Seriousneſs and Attention and Reverence. It is God himſelf who ſpeaks by the Mouth of his Miniſters; and his Speech is of Life and Death, of Life and Death eternal. He that hath Ears to hear, let him hear. Are not thoſe Things moſt worthy of our Notice and Conſideration, which are of the greateſt Weight and Moment to us? Ought we not to be ever mindful of thoſe Things, the Obſervance of which will entitle us to a never-fading Crown of Glory; and the Neglect of which will be Ruin to us for evermore? If the Ears

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of the Mind be not open; in Vain does the Voice of the Preacher found in our bodily Ears. *We then hearing, hear not,* as our Saviour expresses it. The Word of God is indeed the Food of the Soul; but that it may nourish and strengthen, it must enter into the Soul, and be retain'd there, and digested by Attention and frequent Recollection and Contemplation. If the Seed of the Spiritual Sower do not sink into the Heart and take Root there, it can no more bear Fruit than the Seed that falls by the Way-side, which is trodden down, or the Fowls of the Air come and devour it.

I must not forget to add, That since all useful Knowledge and Wisdom is the Gift of God and cometh from Above, all who would attain it, must never fail to address themselves to the Father of Lights by earnest and humble Prayer, That he would direct and bless their Searches after his Truth; That he would open their Eyes to behold the wondrous Things of his Law; That he would

teach

teach them his Statutes, and incline their Hearts unto them, and not suffer them to go Astray in the Ways of Error and Destruction.

SERM.
II.

LASTLY, That which must crown the Success of the Preachers, and make sure the Title of the heavenly Inheritance to the Hearers, is such a Conversation as becometh the Gospel of Christ. All who would be saved by the Gospel, must answer the End of it, by living up to it. They must adorn it, by making it the Rule of their Behaviour. The Design of God in the Gospel is to bring Men to Happiness by Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord. Nothing in the Scripture is more plain and certain, than that Christ requires of us to deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World; and that it is to no purpose to call him Lord, Lord, if we do not the Things which he says; for he is the Author of eternal Salvation to those only who obey him. Hearing, and Faith and Knowledge are so far
good

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 II.

good as they tend to make us good, and no farther. They are all of them in order to Practice; and if separated from it, they will stand us in no stead, but rather aggravate our Guilt, and subject us to an heavier Doom. *For Faith without Works is dead.* And to him that knoweth to do Good, and doeth it not, to him it is Sin. If ye know these Things, happy are ye if ye do them. But *that* Servant which knew his Lord's Will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his Will, *shall be beaten with many Stripes.* Whosoever heareth the Sayings of Christ and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise Man which built his House upon a Rock. And the Rains descended, and the Floods came, and the Winds blew, and beat upon that House, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a Rock. But every one that heareth the Sayings of Christ, and doth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish Man, which built his House upon the Sand. And the Rain descended, and the Floods came, and the Winds blew, and beat upon that House,

and

and it fell, and great was the Fall of it.

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II.

For not the Hearers of the Law are Just before God, but the Doers of the Law shall be justified. Wherefore, my beloved Brethren, be swift to Hear; and lay apart all Filthiness and Superfluity of Naughtiness; and receive with Meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your Souls. But be ye Doers of the Word, and not Hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a Hearer of the Word and not a Doer, he is like unto a Man beholding his natural Face in a Glass; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his Way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of Man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect Law of Liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful Hearer, but a Doer of the Work, this Man shall be blessed in his Deed.

That all of us may be thus blessed, God of his infinite Mercy grant, for the Sake of his Son Jesus Christ our only Lord and Redeemer. To whom, &c.

The

The Evidences of Christ's Resurrection.

Being the Substance of Two
S E R M O N S on that Subject.

2 TIM. II. 8.

*Remember that Jesus Christ, of the Seed
of David, was raised from the Dead.*

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TH E S E Words contain a plain Proposition, that Jesus Christ, of the Seed of *David*, was rais'd from the Dead; as also a strict Charge to *Timothy*, and in him to all Christians, to remember it. From which Injunction of the Apostle we may reasonably conclude, That the Doctrine of Christ's Resurrection is not only a most certain and evident Truth, but also of great Use and Consequence to us, and a most necessary

and fundamental Article of the Christian Faith.

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III, IV.

I SHALL therefore at this Time lay before you the Sum of those Proofs and Evidences upon which our Belief of this great Article of our Faith is grounded.

Now the Resurrection of Christ being an Event suppos'd to have happen'd many Ages since, it is capable of such Proof as other antient Events are capable of, that is the Evidence of Testimony. And if there be as good Evidence of Christ's Resurrection as there is of any other antient Facts, the Truth of which is judg'd unquestionable; then all impartial Persons will allow that the Resurrection of Christ ought to be look'd upon as an undoubted Truth; it being manifestly unreasonable to refuse that Evidence in one Case, which in all other Cases is admitted; unless it can be made appear that this one Case is different from other Cases, and is incapable of being prov'd by the Testimony of Witnesses, either because the Thing said to have been done is not a proper Object of Sense,

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— or else because it implies a Contradiction, and is therefore in it self absolutely impossible; neither of which Objections can be of any Force as to the Matter before us. For a human Body is certainly an Object of several Senses; and by Seeing, and Hearing and Feeling Men may be infallibly assur'd that it is living. And tho' a Resurrection be an unusual Thing, and besides the common Course and Order of Nature, yet by no Argument, drawn either from Sense or from Reason, can it be shewn to be impossible. On the contrary, Reason will suggest to us, that *that* Almighty Power which caus'd a Body to live which had not liv'd before, can as easily at least cause a Body which hath already liv'd to live again; since it cannot be more difficult to restore Life, than it was to impart it at first.

THAT Jesus Christ did truly die, cannot be doubted. There is no room here for the least Suspicion of Fraud. For he was crucified at *Jerusalem*, a Place of great Resort, where he was well known, at Noon-day, at the Time of their

their most solemn Festival, in Presence of Multitudes of Spectators; and they who had the Charge of this Business were his Enemies, and would be sure to do it effectually. Nor did the Adversaries of our Religion ever deny that Christ was truly dead and buried; but have always objected it as a Reproach to Christians, that they were the Followers and Worshipers of one who was known to have died the Death of a Slave and most infamous Malefactor. If therefore after this he really shew'd himself alive, then it cannot be denied that he did rise again.

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Now that he did shew himself alive after his Death and Burial to more than five hundred Eye-witnesses, is affirm'd by St. Paul; the greatest Part of whom, he tells us, were alive many Years afterwards, at the Time when he wrote his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*. Twelve of his Disciples were appointed to be select Witnesses to Mankind of this extraordinary and important Event, who accordingly made it the Business of their Lives to publish it, both by their Preaching

— ing and Sufferings, to all the Nations of
 SERM. the Earth.

III, IV.

— I AM aware that a Question has been asked by some, If Christ did really rise again, why did he not shew himself publicly to the Jewish Sanhedrim, and to the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem* and *Judaea*? It might as well have been ask'd, Why did he not appear to the Roman Emperor and Senate, who were a more considerable Body of Men than the Jewish Sanhedrim? Nay, why did he not appear to all Nations? Why not to all Persons of all Nations in all Ages, and that not once, but very often? For there is no End of the extravagant Demands of Men not contented with what is necessary. Several Reasons may be assign'd, why Christ did not after his Resurrection appear publicly to the Jewish Nation. But there needs no other Answer to this idle Question than to observe, that if there were Witnesses enow of Christ's Resurrection, it is very unreasonable to object that there were no more. Surely a Fact that is prov'd by sufficient Evidence,

dence, is not disprov'd by alledging that there are no more Proofs. From many other Instances as well as this it appears, that it is God's usual Method of acting, to do not all that it is possible for him to do, but what he judges necessary and fitting to be done. If on any occasion God provides such Means as are proper and requisite for bringing about the Ends he aims at, tho' he do nothing farther, What just Exception does there lie against this Manner of Proceeding? Is it unworthy of him to adapt and proportionate the Means to the End? Or is it any Impeachment of his Wisdom, or Justice, or Goodness, that he does not satisfy the Expectations of unreasonable Men; which, it is manifest, are boundless, and never to be satisfied? The only Question that ought to be between us and the Unbelievers on this Head is this, Whether God hath provided such a Number of Witnesses of our Lord's Resurrection, as is sufficient for the Conviction of reasonable Persons; that is, of such as are desirous to discover the Truth,

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and

— and sincerely dispos'd to embrace it.
 SERM. Now that the Number of the Witnesses
 III, IV. is abundantly sufficient for this Purpose,
 — appears from hence, That among Men
 of all Ranks and Conditions in all Coun-
 tries and Ages of the World, Affairs of
 the greatest Moment have constantly
 been, and still are determin'd, and Con-
 troversies of the last Importance both to
 the Fortunes and to the Lives of Men
 have always been, and still are finally
 decided by the Evidence of a much
 smaller Number of credible Witnesses.

THE Evidence therefore of our Sa-
 viour's Resurrection, consider'd with re-
 gard to the Number of Persons testifying
 it, is altogether unexceptionable. And
 if we consider it with regard to the Cha-
 racter and Qualifications of the Witnesses,
 and the Manner and Circumstances of
 their Testimony, we shall find that it is
 equally unexceptionable on these Accounts
 also; and consequently that it is in all Re-
 spects absolutely compleat and satisfactory.

THE Credibility of any Evidence is
 increased or abated, in proportion to the
 Inte-

Integrity and Information of the Witnesses. If they who testify have not rightly inform'd themselves of the Matter which they relate, or if they do wilfully falsify in their Relation, their Depositions ought to be esteem'd of no Validity. But if there be no Ground to suspect the Witnesses either of Unfaithfulness or of Mistake; If, on the other hand, there be very strong Proofs both of their Fidelity and of their Knowledge, that they have no Design to impose upon others, nor have been impos'd upon themselves; If a considerable Number of such Witnesses do all concur in asserting the same thing, expressly, industriously, zealously, openly, boldly, frequently, constantly, without Ambiguity, without Reserve, without Hesitation, without Retracting, without Prospect of Advantage, without any human Probability of meeting with Credit, in Opposition to the combin'd Forces of all the Learning and Wealth, and Authority, and Superstition and Vices of the World; renouncing all that is dear and desirable; not tempted

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by the Promises of Rewards to unsay what they have affirm'd, nor flinching under the Apprehensions, and Trials of the most cruel Sufferings, from which they might be exempted by revoking their Testimony, or barely forbearing to publish it: If besides all this, there be visible Tokens of a Divine Presence going along with them, and sealing their Testimony by mighty Signs and Wonders, and causing all Opposition to fall before them; this Testimony, if any, is credible and valid. If such Evidence as this be once set aside, then nothing is to be prov'd by Testimony; no Business can be transacted among Men, no Controversies can be terminated, no Reports nor Histories however attested are to be credited, neither Man nor God himself is to be believ'd; here is an End of all Certainty, and we must for ever abandon ourselves to Doubting and Scepticism.

LET us now apply this to the Evidence of our Lord's Resurrection, that we may judge whether there be any Defect in it.

IN order to discover what is the true Character of those who testified Christ's Resurrection, it will not be impertinent to observe, that the moral Precepts which those Persons deliver'd by Writing as well as by Preaching, are known to excel those of the most celebrated Philosophers. As their Master had done before them, so did they on all Occasions press and bind upon Men the Practice of all manner of Virtue, and particularly a punctual Observance of the Rules of Justice, Truth and Honesty. They did likewise condemn and forbid under the severest Penalties all sorts of Vice and Immorality, and especially Injustice of all kinds; all Guile and Hypocrisy; all Arts of Deceit and Imposture. This I confess is no Demonstration that the Apostles were themselves such Men as they taught others to be; for many say, and do not, Very often Mens Behaviour is a Contradiction to their Doctrine. But from hence however this Conclusion necessarily follows, that the Religion which the Apostles profess'd and preach'd, was far from ha-

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— — — — — ving any Tendency to vitiate their Morals, or to make them dishonest Men, and engage them in any fraudulent Designs. Their avowed Principles could not prompt them, nay would not allow them to be Knaves. They could not possibly think themselves oblig'd in Conscience; they could not consistently think themselves at liberty to invent and spread a Lie and to persist in it, in order to propagate a Religion, of which Fidelity is an essential Part; the very Foundation of which is laid in Truth and Sincerity, and which prohibits all Lying under Pain of everlasting Damnation.

BUT there is still remaining positive and direct Proof of the Probity and Credit of those who bore Witness to the Resurrection. They who well knew their Persons and Tempers, and manner of Life, by conversing long and familiarly with them, their Companions and Scholars, and they who lived in the Times immediately succeeding, have in their Writings upon several Occasions made so honourable mention of them, and bestowed

ed on them such Encomiums, and given
such Relations concerning them, as leave
no room for their good Character to be
called in Question. If we may believe
those who know most of them (And in
this Case whom else ought we to be-
lieve?) their Conversation was unblame-
able and exemplary. So far as appears,
from the Time that they enter'd upon
their Apostolic Office, they transcrib'd
their own Precepts into their Lives, and
adorn'd by their Practice the Doctrines
which they recommended by their Preach-
ing. They are described to have been
Persons eminent not only for their Piety
towards God, but also for their Faithful-
ness and Sincerity, their plain and con-
scientious and honourable Dealing in their
Intercourse with Men; for their invin-
cible Firmness and Constancy, Meekness
and Patience; for their fervent and ex-
tensive Charity, and their disinterested
and unwearied Endeavours to do Good
to the Souls and Bodies of Men; for
their Temperance, and Moderation and
Mortification; for their Selfdenial and

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Contempt of worldly Things, which set them above those Temptations by which Men are usually sway'd to make use of indirect and dishonest Arts.

Not only a few of their Scholars and their earliest Successors, whose Writings are still extant, had this great Opinion of them; but vast Multitudes of People of all Degrees and Professions, and in all Countries, who had been converted by their Preaching, and were Eye-witnesses of their Conversation, gave most convincing Proofs that they entertain'd the highest Veneration for them. The whole Catholic Church, taken out of all Nations and Languages, receiv'd their Doctrines as the Declarations of God, and submitted to their Injunctions as to Divine Constitutions; and this without Compulsion, without the Persuasions of Eloquence, without any View to temporal Interest, generally at their Peril, and to their Disgrace, and oftentimes to their great Inconvenience, and the enduring most painful Sufferings; to the Loss of Goods and Estate, and even of Life.

Now

Now it is utterly inconceivable that so numerous a Body of Men, so widely dispersed'd, should all conspire to act at this Rate, had not the Apostles by an unblameable and shining Behaviour gain'd to themselves the Character of Men of God; the Reputation of more than ordinary Probity and Sanctity; and had they not by persevering in such Behaviour maintain'd that Character and Reputation to the end.

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THE Attestation of so large and diffusive a Society as was the Universal Primitive Church to the Character of the Apostles is of itself sufficient to bear any Stress that may be laid upon it; and is besides very much confirm'd by their own Writings, in which there is not the least Sign of Cheat or Imposture, but all possible Appearance of Truth and Honesty. There is every where visible in them the greatest Plainness and Simplicity; and there runs thro' them such a Spirit of Piety and all Virtue, as seems imitable by any but such as are indeed endow'd with those Qualifications which
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the Apostles are reported to have been Masters of.

IF to all this we add, that their Enemies, antient or modern, were never able to fix upon them any Imputation tending to derogate from their Credit; altho' it very much concern'd them to do this, and they undoubtedly would have done it, had they been able; nothing more need be said to establish the general Character of the Witnesses of the Resurrection.

AND in this particular Transaction there is no manner of likelihood that they were Guilty of any Fraud, or were influenced by any indirect Views. But there are the strongest Reasons to believe that they acted from Principles of Conscience, out of pure Zeal for Truth, and with the greatest Integrity.

THE Apostles were, almost all of them, simple and illiterate Persons, who made no Figure, nor had any considerable Interest; of mean Parentage and Education, and in low Circumstances. This is generally acknowledged even by

the Adversaries of Christianity, who have
from hence rais'd an Objection against it. SERM.
III, IV.
That a Company of such Persons as these
should ever once entertain a Thought of
Profelyting the World to themselves, by
spreading a Story which they themselves
knew to be false, and which it was not
likely any would hastily and upon slight
Grounds admit to be true, in order to
introduce a Religion which was to sub-
vert all other Religions already esta-
blish'd, and which was directly contrary
to the Lusts and Passions, the Errors and
Vices of all Mankind; That they should
ever hope to succeed in such a Design
as this, without any human Assistance
or Prospect of it, under the greatest Dif-
ficulties and Disadvantages, and maugre
the most violent Opposition all the World
would be sure to make against it; That
notwithstanding all Discouragements and
Obstacles, they should by such wise and
effectual Methods prosecute it, as actual-
ly to accomplish it, and thereby bring
about the most important and remarkable
Revolution that ever was; is a Thing so
very

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very remote from all Probability, so very near to Impossibility, that he who credits it, must credit a Thing much harder to be believ'd than the Resurrection itself.

LET us consider in what Manner, and by what Methods the Apostles carried on their Design, and see whether they afford any just Grounds to suspect a Forgery. It is undeniable, that they began to testify the Resurrection of their Master, not after a long Interval of Time, but quickly after he had been publicly crucified, while the Circumstances of his Death and Burial were fresh in every ones Memory, and the common Topics of all Conversation. Not in a Country far distant from the Scene of Action, but in the very Place where their Master had been lately put to Death and buried; where the Actors in that Tragedy, and many also of the Spectators resided; and where all Persons had the best Opportunity of enquiring into and knowing the Truth. Not to a few only, not privately and in Corners; but in the Face of
the

the World to great Multitudes, at *Jeru-*
salem the Capital of *Judæa*, and a very SERM.
III, IV.
populous City; at the Time of one of
their solemn Festivals, when many My-
riads of *Jews* and pious Gentiles were
come up thither to worship, not only
from all Parts of *Judæa*, but from every
Nation under Heaven. Not only to their
Acquaintance and Followers, Friends ei-
ther to their Master or to themselves;
not only to Persons of low Condition, or
of mean Endowments of Mind, who
might be thought the most liable to be
impos'd on; but to Persons of all Sorts
and Degrees without Distinction; to those
of the most ample Fortunes, and in the
highest Stations; to those of the greatest
Name for Learning and Policy; to their
Lord's most bitter and irreconcilable Ene-
mies; to those who had been the Con-
trivers and Authors of his Death, the
High Priests and Elders, who wanted
neither Skill nor Authority, nor Inclina-
tion, and whom it mightily behov'd
in Point of Interest and Reputation to
detect the Cheat, if there were any, and

to

————— to bring the Forgers of it to condign
 SERM. Punishment.
 III, IV.

THEY gave in their Evidence not lightly and ludicrously, but with all becoming Seriousness and Solemnity, as in a Concern of the greatest Moment; not in Words obscure and of uncertain Signification, so as to leave room either for others to misunderstand it, or for themselves to deny and evade it; but in the clearest and strongest Terms, in as proper and significant Expressions as Language could convey. Not by Compulsion, nor by the Instigation of others; not long deliberating, whether they should testify or no; not with Reluctancy or Irresolution; not doubtingly or waveringly, but of their own Accord, with the greatest Willingness, and with remarkable Alacrity and Zeal; not only uncall'd for, but in Contradiction to the Commands of their Superiors, as Persons fully assur'd both of the Truth of what they depos'd, and of the indispensable Obligation they were under to publish it; declaring most solemnly, *That they*

must obey God rather than Man, and that they could not but speak the Things which they had seen and heard. Not once, nor for a short Time, nor in one Place only, not occasionally nor by the bye; but very often, during a Course of many Years, and unto their Lives end; industriously seeking Opportunities of publishing their Testimony, forsaking all other Employments, and devoting themselves wholly to this; spending their Days in continual Labour and Travels, *that by them the Preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles in every City and Country of the Universe might hear.* Not differently, on different Occasions, but to all Persons, at all Times, and in all Places invariably and alike; in perfect Agreement with themselves, and with one another; not faintly or timorously, not disguising or palliating the Matter to avoid the Displeasure of any, but with signal Courage and Boldness, in the most open and unguarded manner declaring the naked Truth, and representing it in its native Colours, to those to whom it
must

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III, IV.

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III, IV.
— must needs be most offensive, and whom
it was very dangerous to offend; undauntedly and with notable Presence of Mind telling the Jews, *Jesus of Nazareth a Man approved of God among you by Miracles and Wonders and Signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know, Him being delivered by the determinate Counsel and Fore-knowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked Hands have crucified and slain,*
— *This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are Witnesses; And proclaiming to the Faces of the High Priests themselves and of the whole Senate, The God of our Fathers hath raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a Tree; Him hath God exalted with his right Hand to be a Prince and a Saviour. This is the Stone which was set at nought of you Builders, which is become the Head of the Corner. And we are his Witnesses of these Things. Such was their De-meanour even to the Governours of their Nation. All this has certainly the Face of plain and upright Dealing: Here are*

no Marks of Craft and Deceit. These Ways of Proceeding bear no Resemblance to the Tricks and Wiles of Impostors. Truth, Truth alone is open and constant, uniform and always the same; loves to come at the Light, and will bear Examination, and is not to be over-ruled either by Fear or Shame.

SERM.
III, IV.

KNAVISH and fraudulent Designs are generally undertaken and pursued with a View to some selfish and worldly End, such as Gain, Power, Honour, or the Gratification of Lust. But what worldly End, what secular Advantage the Apostles could aim at by testifying the Resurrection of their Master, is utterly unimaginable. They could not expect thereby to insinuate themselves into the Favour of the High Priest and Rulers, nor to receive any Reward or Countenance from them, who had all along persecuted their Master as a Counterfeit, and had at last imbrued their Hands in his Blood; for them therefore it was very necessary that he should be reputed a Deceiver. They could not reasonably

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hope

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III, IV.

— hope to ingratiate themselves with the People of the *Jews*, who were notorious for their zealous Adherence to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Mosaic Law, which the Law of Jesus abrogated, and who were known to look for a Messiah, who should be a mighty temporal Prince, and free them from the Roman Yoke; not one who should erect a spiritual Kingdom, into which all who would enter must renounce this present World, and wait till the next for their Recompence. They could not think to recommend themselves to the Gentiles, whether *Romans, Greeks or Barbarians*, because the Religion which was to be set up by means of this Testimony condemn'd, and was design'd to take away, all their erroneous Doctrines and vicious Practices, all the idolatrous Worship and the various Species of Superstition that reigned among them; all their unlawful Arts and Occupations, all their impure Sports and Spectacles, all their Poms and Vanities, to which the Generality of the Heathen World were very strongly addicted,

dicted, to which many among them ow'd
their Honours and Dignities and Repu-
tation, and upon which Millions depen-
ded for their Subsistence.

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III, IV.

THE Apostles therefore could not
propose to themselves any worldly Gain,
or Advancement by bearing their Testi-
mony; they could look for no other than
to be great Sufferers by it; as it is clear
all must be, who will be so hardy as to
set themselves to oppose the darling No-
tions and receiv'd Usages, the Vices, In-
clinations and Interests of all Men living.

AND it is certain, that the Apostles
were before-hand appriz'd that a faithful
Discharge of their Duty in this Particular
would expose them to hard and injurious
Treatment. Their Lord had plainly fore-
told to them that *in the World they should
have Tribulation; that they should be per-
secuted from City to City, and be hated of
all Nations; that they should be brought
before Kings and Rulers; be scourg'd and
imprisoned, and delivered up to Death
for his Name's sake; and that they who
killed them should think they did God
Service.*

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Service. This he required as a necessary Condition of all who lifted themselves in his Service. If any one will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross daily and follow me. If any one come to me, and hate not his Father and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren and Sisters, yea and his own Life also, he cannot be my Disciple. And whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my Disciple. Accordingly St. Paul declares, That God had set forth the Apostles last, as Men appointed unto Death; and that the Holy Ghost witnessed in every City that Bonds and Afflictions did abide him. The same Forewarning which Christ gave to his Disciples, They very plainly and honestly gave to their Followers also. We must thro' much Tribulation (saith St. Paul) enter into the Kingdom of God. The Thessalonians he exhorts not to be moved by these Afflictions; for your Selves know, saith he, that we are appointed thereunto. For verily when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer Tribulation;

bulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know. St. James also thus encourages the Jews of the Dispersion, *Take, my Brethren, the Prophets for an Example of suffering Affliction and of Patience. For even hereunto were ye called, saith St. Peter, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an Example, that ye should follow his Steps. And in another Place, Think it not strange concerning the fiery Trial, which is to try you. Surely Seducers are not wont to set out with such Views and Apprehensions, nor to persuade their Hearers by such Arguments as these. Surely this is, not the Voice of Impostors to entice Men over to their Party.*

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THE Event fully answer'd the Predictions of our Saviour, and the Apostle's own Expectations. From the Moment they enter'd upon the Province allotted to them, they were treated as the Refuse and Scum of Mankind; *as the Filth of the World, and as the Off-scouring of all Things; with Contempt, Reproach and Hatred; with Scoffs and Ignominy, with the*

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III, IV.

most shameful and barbarous Indignities, Bonds and Stripes and Imprisonments; Banishments and Loss of all Things, Hardships and Sufferings of all Kinds, even to Extremities, and Death itself, were their Portion. Nor were they dismay'd by the Apprehensions of approaching Tryals, nor dejected by the Sense of present Evils. In expecting them they yielded not to Fear, and in bearing them they were more than Conquerors. They profess'd, and it was visible to those who were nearest to them that they truly profess'd, *that none of these Things mov'd them; neither counted they their Lives dear unto themselves, so that they might finish their Course with Joy, and the Ministry which they had receiv'd of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the Grace of God. They rejoyc'd that they were thought worthy to suffer for his Name's sake, and gloried in Tribulations. Under all Discouragements and Distresses, with great Power gave they Witness of the Resurrection of the Lord; and neither by any Terrors or Violence could be brought*

brought to overthrow their own Evidence by a Denial of it, or to suppress it by Silence. A Compliance in either of those Ways might have set them free from all their Troubles, and have entitled them to very considerable Advantages. These were Temptations not to be resisted by Impostors, for by yielding to them they would have gain'd their Ends. But the Apostles would not accept of Deliverance upon these Terms. They would not purchase the Enjoyments of Life at this rate. Rather than retract their Testimony, rather than desist from propagating it, they renounc'd Ease, Convenience, Pleasure, Profit, Honour, in a word all those Things, the Desire of which gives Birth to Impostures, and voluntarily underwent all those Inconveniencies and Sufferings which Cheats would have been glad by any Means in their Power to avoid. Certainly worldly Considerations could not move them to engage in a Plot, in order to the Execution of which it was plainly necessary for them to quit whatsoever is de-

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— firable in the World, and to endure every Thing that is dreadful. And if they were not acted by worldly Considerations, it remains that Conscience alone was that which induc'd them to bear this Testimony. And indeed nothing but a good Conscience could animate them to encounter such mighty Difficulties and Opposition, and support them under so heavy a Load of Afflictions.

— If it be said, That they imagined they should be recompens'd for their Sufferings in another Life; this will readily be granted; but this is a Motive which coincides with that of Conscience. If they did really believe another Life, they could never hope to be rewarded by a just God hereafter, for having devis'd a Lye, and impos'd it in his Name on their Fellow-creatures as a Truth. And if they had not believ'd another Life, they would never of their own Accord have parted with all the good Things of this, in exchange for all the Evils of it. It is very easy to conceive that Men who disbelieve a future State, may contrive and promote

promote a Cheat with a View of better-
ing their Condition in this, but not with
a View of making it worse. It is utterly
irreconcilable with the Principles of such
Men to chuse to be miserable in this Life,
which they suppose to be the only one;
to bring upon themselves Inconveni-
encies which they may avoid, and to be
fond of Suffering merely for Suffering's
sake.

THE Apostles therefore gave the ut-
most Proof that Men could possibly give
of their Veracity. Whom may we cre-
dit, if not those who testified to their
own Disadvantage, and to their utter
Ruin in this World? If a Witness free-
ly lay down his Life for his Evidence,
what further Confirmation of it can
reasonably be demanded? Can a stron-
ger Seal be set to any Testimony, than
that of the Blood of the Testifier?

It has already been made appear that
the Apostles could not but foresee, and
actually did foresee, that their Testimony
would be very prejudicial to them, and
expose them to very unjust and cruel
Usage.

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Usage. But if the contrary had been true, that at first they flattered themselves with Hopes of being Gainers by their Testimony, yet as soon as these Hopes were disappointed, which must be very quickly; when they found that the Pursuit of their Design would necessarily be attended with many Difficulties to appearance insuperable; that it would involve them in many inextricable Perplexities and inevitable Mischiefs, and at length end in their Destruction; The Foresight and Experience of these Things must have diverted them from proceeding, and dispos'd them to retreat, had they not been fully assur'd that they were maintaining the Cause of Truth, and might on that account depend on receiving a Recompence from the God of Truth, tho' not here, yet hereafter. In these Circumstances there could be no other Inducement to carry on the Work they had begun, but a firm Persuasion that they were oblig'd in Conscience to do so.

It is acknowledg'd to be true that
Obstinacy will carry Men great Lengths
for the maintaining what they have once
asserted. And it is as true, that no In-
stances can be produc'd of Obstinacy;
the Circumstances of which are nearly
parallel to the Case of the Apostles.
Obstinacy is commonly the Consequence
of Mistake, which Men are loth to own;
but the Apostles, as will hereafter be
shewn, could not possibly be mistaken in
the Matter of their Testimony. Obsti-
nacy seldom or never sets out without
some Hopes of Advantage, tho' it re-
mains sometimes after those Hopes are
defeated. The Apostles could never be
defeated of such Hopes, because, as has
been already shewn, they never enter-
tain'd any. They did from the begin-
ning expect whatsoever beset them after-
wards. Obstinacy is incident chiefly to
weak and passionate, rash and inconfide-
rate Persons. Whereas the Apostles, by
what appears from their own Writings,
and from what is delivered, concerning
them by those who were best acquainted
with

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with their Character, were intelligent sober Men, of great Temper and Moderation, meek, gentle, peaceable, patient of Contradiction and of Injuries, circumspect in their Behaviour, and studying to give no just Cause of Offence. And as the Course of their Ministry lasted many Years, they had during that Season many Intervals of Sedateness, many Opportunities for cool Reflection and Consideration. They were indeed true to the Trust repos'd in them, and continued to the end to promote the Cause they had espous'd. But then they justified their Conduct by very weighty Reasons; and Perseverance grounded on Reason is not Obstinacy but Constancy. Obstinacy being an Affection not founded on Truth and Reason, which are the only steady and invariable Principles of Action, will not operate uniformly and alike in a multitude of different Persons, nor yet in the same Persons at all Times; it will generally, in some sooner, in others later, either yield to advantageous Offers, or be conquer'd by a long Series of grievous

grievous Sufferings, if it appears that no Relief from them can be obtain'd but by Compliance. But the Apostles unanimously stood to their Testimony to the last; nor could any of them either by fair Means, or by the severest, be ever brought to revoke it, or to abate of their Zeal for the Publication of it. It is well known of how great Force the Allurements and Terrors of the World are to incline Men to do what is wrong and scandalous. It is therefore altogether incredible, it may justly be esteem'd a moral Impossibility, that neither nor both of these should be able to prevail on some few of many, on one at least out of a large Body of Men to do what is right and commendable, such as the Detection of a Falshood, and the exposing a Cheat must be confess'd to be. Now the Apostles, whose proper Employment it was to notify to the World the Resurrection of their Master, were in number no fewer than Twelve, and they were selected to this Office out of more than five Hundred, who profess'd themselves

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to have been Eye-witnesses of Christ's Resurrection as well as they. If the Story of the Resurrection had been a meer Invention, it must have been very dangerous to have trusted so numerous a Company with the Secret. The admitting so many into the Plot was the ready Way to betray and defeat it, "as any one will
 " acknowledge who reflects how irresolute and variable many Tempers are,
 " and that these Men would be incessantly
 " plied with Persuasions and Promises,
 " with Threats and Punishments by the
 " Chief Priests and other principal Persons of the Jewish Nation, who would
 " leave no Stone unturn'd to prove Jesus
 " a false Prophet, and the Rumour of
 " his Resurrection a Fable." There could be no Security, because there was no probability, that among so many none should ever alter their Resolution thro' Levity and Inconstancy of Mind; none should at any time be influenced by Remorse of Conscience; none should be moved by private Dissentions among themselves, or by Hopes, or by Fear,

or

or by Sufferings, I do not say now to
commit any Wickedness, but to act ho-
nestly, to confess the Truth, and put
Liars to Shame. And yet the Enemies
of Christianity never pretended that any
one of so great a Number of Witnesses
did ever go back from what he had asser-
ted, or that any of them ever offered to
discover a Plot, to report Jesus risen
when he was not risen, tho' Interest as
well as Duty oblig'd them all, and the
most violent and inhuman Methods were
us'd with many of them to compel them
to such a Discovery. But they did all
of them persevere to the end in main-
taining their Testimony, to the Prejudice
of their Interests, with patient enduring
of Shame and Persecutions, and if Need
requir'd at the Expence of Life it self.
Not Obstinacy, but Conscience and full
Conviction of Truth could produce so
regular and uniform an Effect in so ma-
ny different Persons, in the most difficult
Circumstances, and under the strongest
Temptations to act otherwise for a long
Time

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Time together, without one Exception to the contrary.

It has been objected that Criminals do sometimes persist in denying the Facts which have been fully prov'd upon them, and dye testifying their Innocence with their last Breath; and yet are not therefore believ'd innocent. But tho' Criminals do sometimes dye testifying their Innocence, yet they do not dye for the sake of that Testimony, but for Crimes plainly proved upon them. They do not suffer willingly; they cannot escape Death by confessing the Truth; but they apprehend that confessing the Truth would inevitably bring upon them the Execution of the Sentence; and for this Reason they deny it in Hopes of saving their Life by that Denial.

BUT the Apostles not only died testifying the Resurrection of Jesus, but they died for the Sake of that Testimony. They also died most willingly. They could have avoided Suffering by forbearing to give their Testimony; or by re-
tracting

retracting it afterwards, they could have delivered themselves from their Sufferings; but rather than do either of these they chose to suffer. It was not the Hope of saving their Lives that put them upon giving their Testimony, or withheld them from retracting it (which is the Case of Criminals) but it was on the Account of this very Testimony that they died, tho' it was in their Power to have sav'd their Lives by suppressing or retracting it. These two Cases then, of Criminals and of the Apostles, are so far from being parallel, that they are utterly unlike; and in the most material Circumstances directly contrary the one to the other.

BUT others perhaps may think that the Case of those who have suffered Martyrdom for a false Religion does more nearly resemble that of the Apostles. For Men have died for false Religions, and for false Doctrines as well as for the True; as all know, who know that contrary Doctrines, of which one must necessarily be false, have had each their

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Martyrs. Wherefore a Man's dying for any Opinion affords no conclusive Argument that that Opinion is true. But then it is the best Argument in the World of the Sincerity of the Man, and that he did inwardly embrace that Opinion which he outwardly profess'd. If a Man suffer Extremities, and part with his Life for the Sake of any Doctrine, he undoubtedly gives the surest Demonstration that it is in the Power of Man to give that he is in Earnest, and does himself verily believe the Doctrine for which he dies to be true. And therefore the Apostles and other Witnesses of the Resurrection of Jesus, by suffering Extremities, and parting with their Lives for their Testimony, did give the utmost Demonstration, that it was in the Power of Men to give, of their own Veracity and Sincerity, and that they did themselves really believe what they testified to others. Now all that we desire to infer from the Sufferings and Martyrdom of the Apostles is this, That they were true Men, who acted sincerely and uprightly

rightly in this Affair, and did not intend to deceive Mankind. For if this be once granted, as by unprejudiced Judges I think it must be granted, that the Apostles did Believe themselves, and had no Design to impose on others, nor did knowingly attest a Falshood; we shall easily compleat our Demonstration of the Credibility of their Evidence, by shewing farther, That they could not be impos'd on themselves in this Affair, but did most certainly, nay could not but necessarily know, whether the Matter of their Testimony was true or false.

IN Opinions and nice Speculations founded on Principles not rightly and thoroughly understood, and deduc'd by many subtle Reasonings difficult to be apprehended, and by a long Train of Consequences hard to be attended to and retain'd in Memory, even honest and industrious and judicious Enquirers easily may, and often do mistake; and in consequence of such their Mistake may suffer for Error, supposing it to be Truth. But in Matters of Fact, which are the

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proper Objects of the Senses, and which actually come under the Notice of Mens Senses, this cannot happen to careful and diligent Observers. Here, if any where, Men may always arrive at Certainty without mixture of Doubting, and beyond all Possibility of Mistake. Now the Testimony of the Apostles, which we are now discoursing of, did not concern any speculative Opinion, but a matter of Fact, which must be confess'd to be a proper Object of Sense, and which after the most careful Observation and Examination they declared themselves fully assur'd of by their own Senses.

THE Apostles had convers'd familiarly with the Person whose Resurrection they testified, and were his constant Attendants for several Years together before his Death. By his Death they had been parted from him not full three Days, when he appear'd to them Alive. They saw him; they heard him; they handled him. They examin'd his Hands and his Feet, which had been lately nail'd to the Cross, and his Side which had been pierc'd

pierc'd with a Spear. By which means they were abundantly convinc'd that he was really a living Man, and that he was no Phantom, nor any other Person than their Master Jesus. And indeed in these Circumstances it was evidently impossible that any other Person should pass for him. Here is no ground to charge the Apostles with Credulity. So far from that, that when certain Women reported to them that the Body of Jesus was missing out of the Sepulchre, and that they had seen a Vision of Angels, who told them he was alive, and that one of them had herself seen the Lord; their Words seem'd to them as idle Tales. And yet no good Reason can be given why this Evidence of the Women, tho' disbeliev'd by the Disciples, and derided by Infidels, should be disregarded, since the Women had Eyes and Ears, and might certainly know what they had seen and heard. And when the rest of the Disciples reported to *Thomas* that they had seen the Lord, he rejected their joynt Testimony, and insisted upon seeing him with his own

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— Eyes, declaring that unless he should see in his Hands the Print of the Nails, and put his Finger into the Print of the Nails, and thrust his Hand into his Side, he would not believe. This Satisfaction the Lord soon afterwards vouchsafed to give him, not only for his own Conviction, but for the Confirmation of the Faith of all succeeding Generations, saying to *Thomas*, Reach hither thy Finger, and behold my Hands; and reach hither thy Hand and thrust it into my Side, and be not Faithless, but Believing; and *Thomas* answer'd and said, My Lord and my God.

THE Apostles never profess'd to testify any thing concerning this Matter, but what they themselves had been Eye-witnesses and Ear-witnesses of. *That which we have heard, saith St. John, which we have seen with our Eyes, which we have look'd upon, and our Hands have handled of the Word of Life, declare we unto you.*

NOR did the Disciples see their Master after he was risen, once only, or

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transiently, but they convers'd with him very often, even forty Days together; during which space *He shew'd himself Alive, saith St. Luke, by many infallible Proofs.* He discours'd with them on various Subjects; He eat and drank with them; He reprov'd them, and upbraided them with their Hardness of Belief; He expounded the Scriptures to them, and reminded them of several Things which he had spoken to them while he was with them before; He blessed them, conferr'd on them proper Powers, and gave them the necessary Directions for the Execution of their Office, after he should be taken from them; and then on the fortieth Day, He was, while they looked on him, received up into Heaven.

WHOEVER duly weighs all this, must, I think, allow that the Apostles themselves could not be mistaken or impos'd upon in this Matter, but must certainly know, whether what they reported was true or no. And I have before shewn, that they gave the most ample

SERM. Demonstration possible, that they acted
 III, IV. uprightly, and did not impose on others.
 Which two Considerations render their
 Testimony wholly unexceptionable, and
 establish the Credibility of it upon im-
 moveable Foundations. Since nothing
 more can be requir'd to render any Tes-
 timony credible, than that the Party
 testifying appears to be neither deceiv'd
 himself, nor has a Mind to deceive others.
 The Testimony of one such Witness is
 sure and to be relied on; much more
 does the concurring Testimony of a con-
 siderable Number of such Witnesses de-
 mand our Assent, and is worthy of all
 Acceptation.

MOREOVER God himself did in a
 very publick and signal manner vouch-
 safe his Attestation to the Veracity of the
 Apostles, by endowing them with super-
 natural Gifts, and enabling them to do
 many miraculous and wonderful Works
 for the Confirmation of their Testimony.
 That the Wonders said to have been
 wrought by the Apostles were beyond
 the Reach of human Skill and Power to
 effect.

effect, will, I doubt not, be confess'd
by all. And that such Wonders were
really wrought by them, we have as
good Assurance as we have of any Facts
whatsoever at so great a Distance of
Time. *Luke*, one of their constant Com-
panions, has left a Relation of many of
them, which carries in it all possible
Marks of Sincerity and Fidelity. Nor
were the Apostles themselves only pos-
sessed of the extraordinary Gifts of the
Spirit, but by Laying on of Hands they
communicated them to many others.
And both they and their Companions do
in their Epistles frequently mention
them, as well known to and abounding
among those to whom they wrote, and
give Directions for the duly exercising
them, and for reforming the Abuses of
them. The Consideration of which will
not suffer us to question the real Exis-
tence of them in those Churches, to
which those Epistles were sent. These
miraculous Powers were likewise conti-
nued to the Church for some Ages after
the Death of the Apostles, as all the
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Christian Writers of those Times do with one accord, and on many Occasions bear Witness; and do most solemnly appeal to them, as most notorious and unanswerable Proofs of the Truth and Divinity of their Religion. Nor did the antient Disputants against Christianity, who had the best Means of enquiring into the Truth of the Facts, ever deny that the Apostles did really work Miracles, but chose rather to answer the Argument which the Christians drew from them in Favour of their Religion, by imputing them to the Power of magical Arts. The weakness of which Answer appears from hence, That it supposes Satan to have oppos'd himself, by empowering the Apostles to exercise magical Arts for the setting up a Religion, which was directly levell'd against all magical and superstitious Practices of all Kinds; and which pursuant to its Design did, where-ever it prevail'd, overthrow the Kingdom, and take away the Worship of all Demons whatsoever. Add to all this, That the surprizing Success the Apostles met with
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in propagating their Testimony, evidently shews that they were assisted by a more than human Power, without which they could never have executed their Design so effectually, since they had neither the Advantages of Learning or Elocution, Wealth or Authority, Force or Numbers on their Side, but the Reverse of all these; and when those likewise who were to be brought over to their Party, must expose themselves to many Difficulties and Inconveniencies, to Loss and Ignominy, and to the sharpest Trials and Persecutions on that account. No Instance can be brought of any Imposture that diffus'd itself so widely in such Circumstances; for as to Mahometanism, it was confessedly propagated by the Sword, according to the express Command of its Founder. Even Truth itself could not have made its way in the World, under such various Difficulties and Discouragements, and against so mighty an Opposition, with so speedy and uncontrollable a Progress, had not the great Author of Truth, in a most

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extraordinary and miraculous manner, supported and conducted it. From all which it is abundantly evident, That *the Lord did work with the Apostles*, as *St. Mark relates, and confirm'd the Word with Signs following.* That Word therefore thus confirm'd must have been true, since God cannot possibly confirm a Lye. Nor can we in this Case disbelieve the Testimony of the Apostles, without rejecting at the same time the Attestation of God himself, and charging him with setting his Seal to a Falshood.

AFTER so full and satisfactory an Evidence given by the Apostles, strengthened and ratified by the Divine Seal, it may seem perfectly needless to produce any collateral Proofs of a Fact thus attested. Tho' the Character, Condition and Conduct of those who oppos'd this Testimony, afford several such Proofs, and those not inconsiderable.

THE High Priests and other Governours of the Jewish Nation were implacably set against Christ and his Doctrine. They had constantly persecuted him, and

at length put him to a most cruel and shameful Death, as an Impostor. Wherefore it nearly concern'd them, that the World should esteem him such. Otherwise it would be impossible for them to maintain their Reputation and Interest with the People. It was come to their Knowledge that Jesus had in his Life-time declar'd, That within three Days after his Death he would rise again. The verifying this Prediction, or the general Belief of its having been verified, threatned, as they apprehended, nothing less than Destruction to themselves, and the Downfall of their Church and State. So that it cannot be doubted but that they would exert themselves, and take all imaginable Care to prevent any false Report of his Resurrection from prevailing. This it was manifestly in their Power to do. For they were resident upon the Place, where they had Opportunity of receiving certain and early Intelligence, and of examining all Persons, and making proper Enquiries into all Transactions. They had likewise all the

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Authority in their Hands, and the People at their Devotion, and the dead Body of Jesus in their Custody. And they actually did use the best Means in their Power for this purpose. A great Stone was roll'd to the Door of the Sepulchre where the Body was laid; they seal'd the Stone with their own Seal, and set a Guard of sixty Roman Soldiers (for of that Number a *Roman Custodia* is said to have consisted) to watch the Sepulchre. After these Precautions, if the Apostles had form'd any Design of imposing on the World, it must necessarily have miscarried; They must either have given it over, or if they had proceeded in it, they must have been detected.

Not many Years since, there were in our own Nation Persons who gave out that they were sent from God. For Proof of which they propos'd to restore one of their own Company who was dead, to life. This miraculous Work they confidently engag'd to do, and long before appointed a Day for it, and put the Credit of their Mission upon the Success

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of this Event. The Nation did not express more Zeal against these Men, than did the *Jews* against Christ and his Apostles; nor had they a more watchful Eye over them, than the *Jews* had over the Apostles, and yet as soon as the Time prefix'd was expir'd, by a moderate Care of the Magistrate the whole Design of these Persons was quash'd at once, and came to nothing. They who had presum'd to promise in the Name of God the Performance of so astonishing a Miracle, never had the Confidence so much as to pretend the accomplishment of what they had promis'd. They knew that it would have been the easiest thing in the World to confute such a Pretence; and they could not hope to gain Profelytes by setting about a Story, which would be no sooner told than disprov'd. In like manner it must have far'd with the Apostles, had they been Deceivers. And the only Reason that can be given why the Jewish Rulers, who us'd so great Diligence and Precaution to prevent any Report of Christ's Resurrection, and afterwards

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————wards left no Means untried to put a stop
 SERM. to it and to discredit it, were not able
 III, IV. either to prevent it, or to suppress or
 ————confute it, is because the Witnesses of
 the Resurrection testified nothing but the
 Truth ; and Truth can never be confu-
 ted, but will always, however it may be
 contradicted, remain invincible, and can-
 not by the most violent Opposition be
 convicted of Falshood.

THE Jewish Rulers had the dead Body
 of Jesus committed to their keeping, and
 they themselves set a Band of *Romans* to
 guard it, that it might not be convey'd
 away. Why then did they not produce
 it, to the Confusion of those who preten-
 ded that he was risen? They certainly
 would have done this, had the Body
 been still in their Possession. They must
 therefore grant, and they do grant, that
 the Body was missing out of the Se-
 pulchre on the third Day, tho' the Se-
 pulchre was hewn out of a Rock, and
 secur'd by a great Stone seal'd with their
 own Seal, and guarded by a strong Watch
 placed there by themselves. How fa-
 vourable

yourable so important a Concession even
of Enemies is to the Testimony of the
Apostles, any indifferent Person may easily discern. It might justly be expected,
that they who guarded the Sepulchre
should in a satisfactory manner account
for the removal of the Body. But they
never gave any tolerable account of this;
never any but such as is not only to the
last degree improbable, but big with
Inconsistency, which sufficiently demon-
strates the Falshood of it. All that they
ever had to say was, That the Disciples
came by Night and stole away the Body
while the Soldiers slept.

BUT how very unlikely is it that the
Disciples, who had so lately deserted
their Master while he was living, should
all of a sudden grow so resolute as to
attempt to rescue him when dead out of
the Hands of threescore Roman Soldiers.
— Could they hope to overpower such a
Force, if they found them waking; or
could they reasonably expect to find
them all sleeping at once? It is incre-
dible, especially considering the strictness
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of the Roman Discipline, that out of such a Number of Roman Soldiers upon Duty there should not be one awake. Or supposing they had been all asleep, yet in all likelihood the execution of this Attempt, the opening the Sepulchre, and the removal of the Body must have awakened some, at least one out of sixty, in which case the Plot of the Apostles would have been defeated. Moreover, if the Soldiers were all asleep, as they pretended, how could they know that the Disciples stole away the Body of Jesus? For ought they could tell to the contrary, he might be rais'd to Life again, as the Disciples, who saw him, when they were awake, affirm'd. How worthy Acceptation are the Depositions of such Persons, who bear Testimony to what was done when, as they themselves confess, they were asleep? In the beginning of this Discourse I observ'd, that Knowledge and Integrity are the necessary Qualifications requir'd in a credible Witness; Knowledge of the Facts which he testifies, and Integrity to declare what

he knows, and nothing more. These
Soldiers may from their own Confession
be proved to have neither of these Qua-
lifications. For they profess to testify,
what they could not possibly know;
what happen'd when, as they pretend,
they were asleep. Surely our Unbe-
lievers have either no Eyes or no Fore-
head, when they affirm and stand to it,
That these Soldiers who testify what was
done while they slept, are more credible
Witnesses than the Apostles, who decla-
red what they saw and heard and felt for
forty Days together. And yet these are
the Men who will not be impos'd upon
by idle Tales and Fables; who will not
take any thing upon Trust; but require
Demonstration e're they yield their As-
sent, and laugh at others for believing
upon slight and insufficient Grounds. But
how high a Value soever these Men may
set upon so absurd an Evidence, it ap-
pears that their Predecessors in Infidelity,
the High Priests themselves, had but a
mean Opinion of it, and thought it no
sufficient Foundation for any judicial Pro-
ceedings.

————ceedings. For the Apostles were never
 SERM. so much as question'd on this account.
 III, IV. They were punish'd for Teaching in the
 Name of Jesus, but never for stealing
 away his Body; as they certainly would
 have been, could any such Villany have
 been prov'd upon them. And it is very
 plain that the Soldiers, if they really
 were asleep, could not consistently testify
 more than this, That the Body of Jesus
 was in the Grave before they slept, and
 was gone when they awak'd; which, as
 I before observ'd, since it allows that the
 Body tho' guarded was missing on the
 third Day, and could not be produc'd
 by those who had the Charge of it, is so
 far from overthrowing, that it confirms
 the Testimony of the Disciples.

THIS Evidence of the Soldiers, which
 convicts itself of Falshood, is yet all
 there is on the Side of Infidelity. The
 Enemies of Christianity have never pre-
 tended, nor do now pretend to produce
 any other Testimony.

I SHALL only further observe, that
 the Evidence of our Lord's Resurrection
 hath

hath been transmitted to us in the same manner as has been the Evidence of all other antient Facts, that is by Writings, with this Advantage, That we are far more secure of the Genuineness and Uncorruptness of these Writings, than we can be of any other whatsoever. For they have been perpetually cited in all Ages, down from the Apostles Times to ours. They were very early distributed into all Countries, and translated into many different Languages, and constantly from the Beginning read publickly in all Congregations of Christians, as the Word of God, and the Rule of their Faith and Manners. Which Circumstances do at once undeniably prove that they were written, at the Time, and by the Persons when and by whom they pretend to have been written; and that they neither have received nor possibly could receive any considerable Alteration. Moreover the Genuineness of their Testimony in this Particular of Christ's Resurrection, is farther confirm'd by the con-

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current Testimony of other Books, which tho' not receiv'd into the Canon of Scripture, were without question written by the Companions of the Apostles and their earliest Successors. And all the Old Records do agree that the Christians did always receive this Testimony, and profess firmly to Believe that Jesus the Founder of their Religion was rais'd from the Dead. And for the perpetual Memory of this great Event, it is certain the whole Christian Church hath from its very Infancy to this Day observ'd both a weekly and an annual Festival. All which put together amounts to a Demonstration, That the Report of Christ's Resurrection is not a Story invented in any later Times, but is coeval with Christianity itself, as I suppose our Adversaries themselves also will acknowledge.

So that upon the whole I question, whether there be remaining so good and unexceptionable Evidence of any other antient Matter of Fact; as there is of this and of those Facts which are connected with

with it, the Memory whereof hath been convey'd to us in the same Records, and by much the same Means by which the Memory of this hath been preserved.

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III, IV.

THE Inferences deducible from this Fundamental Truth are many, and of the greatest Use. The Time will permit me to mention one only, which however will include all.

THE Resurrection of Jesus from the Dead is the most infallible Demonstration that a Jew could ask, or Omnipotence could give of his Divine Mission. Therefore our Religion is impregnable, our Faith immoveable, our Hopes erect and certain. The Motives to Holiness of Life are as forcible, as the Obligations to it are indispensable. Infidelity and Death and the Powers of Hell are vanquish'd together; and on the Side of Christianity there is Safety and Triumph and neverfading Glory.

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III, IV.

NOW unto Jesus Christ, who is the Faithful Witness, and the First Begotten of the Dead, and the Prince of the Kings of the Earth; Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood; Who was Dead and is Alive for evermore, and hath the Keys of Death and of Hell, be ascribed, &c.

S E R M.

S E R M O N V.

The Descent of Christ into Hell.

A

ACTS II. 27.

*Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell, nei-
ther wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to
see Corruption.*

THE Words are a Citation from
the xvith *Pfalm*, which was com-
pos'd by the Royal Prophet *David*; but
that he did not speak them in his own
Person is evident, since they were not
verified of him. For, as *St. Peter* tells
the *Jews*, a little after my Text, *the Pa-
triarch David is both dead and buried,
and his Sepulchre is with us unto this
Day*, and consequently he hath seen
Corrup-

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V.

Corruption. But being a Prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an Oath to him, That of the Fruit of his Loyns, according to the Flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his Throne; He seeing this before spake of the Resurrection of Christ, That his Soul was not left in Hell, neither his Flesh did see Corruption. The Apostle's Argument is very clear and convincing; so that nothing more need be said to prove, that the Words of the Psalmist are to be understood of Jesus Christ.

IN my Discourse on these Words, I propose,

First, To explain the true Meaning of them.

Secondly, To confirm the Doctrine contain'd in them. And,

Thirdly, To deduce from it some Inferences, which may have a useful Influence upon our Practice.

First, I SHALL endeavour to explain the true Meaning of the Words; which as they lie in the Original are very ambiguous, and capable of diverse Translations;

lations ; and do for that reason admit of different Senses.

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For first, the Word *Ψυχή*, which we render Soul, does sometimes in the Translation of the Seventy Interpreters signify a dead Body ; and the Word *ᾍδης*, which is here render'd Hell, frequently signifies the Grave. So that the original Text will bear the following Translation ; Thou wilt not leave my Corps in the Grave, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see Corruption. Again, the Word *Ψυχή*, here render'd Soul, does both in the Translation of the *Septuagint*, and in the *New Testament* frequently signify Life ; so that the Text might have been thus translated, Thou wilt not leave my Life in the Grave, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see Corruption. Which of these two Rendrings is to be preferr'd, is a Question of no great Importance ; since they differ in Words only, and agree in the same Sense. For, according to both, that Part of Christ which was mortal and corruptible is spoken of in both Branches of the Text ;
and

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and these two Clauses, Thou wilt not leave my Corps, or my Life, in the Grave; and thou wilt not suffer thine Holy One to see Corruption, are Explanatory of each other, and do in different Words express the very same Thought. Whereas there seems to be an Antithesis in the Words; and it is most natural by $\Psi\upsilon\chi\eta$, or Soul in the former part of the Verse, to understand that Part of Christ's human Nature which was immortal and incorruptible, and which seems to be oppos'd to that Part of him which was mortal, and might have seen Corruption, tho' it did not. Wherefore in all probability our Translators have rightly render'd the Text; *Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see Corruption.* For allowing the Word $\Psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ to denote the Soul, it must be own'd that by $\text{Aδ\iota\tau\eta}$ is meant Hell, and not the Grave; since the Soul descends not into the Grave; but the Body only. Granting therefore our Translation to be, as it most probably is, the true one; our next Enquiry

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ry must be what is meant by *Hades* or Hell. For tho' the Text assures us that the Soul of Christ was not left in Hell; and we do all of us profess in our Creed to believe that Jesus Christ descended into Hell; yet to the Generality of unlearned Persons it seems to be a very strange Assertion, That so innocent and excellent a Person, as we believe Jesus Christ to have been, went after he was Dead to Hell; at which we shall cease to wonder, when we know what we are to understand by the Word Hell.

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Now the Word "*Adns* or '*Aids* Hell properly signifies an unseen or invisible Place; and is a Term borrow'd from the Theology of the Heathens; who taught that the Souls of all Men when they departed this Life, are convey'd to an invisible Place, or to *Hades*; at the Entrance of which there are, say they, two Paths, the one to the right Hand, the other to the left; that to the right Hand leads to a Place of Pleasure and Happiness, called *Elysium*, where live the Souls of pious and virtuous Men; that to the left

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left Hand leads to a Place called *Tartarus*, where, as they supposed, wicked Men suffer Punishment for the Crimes which they committed while they liv'd in this World. Wherefore in the Opinion of the antient Pagans, *Hades* contain'd both *Elysium* and *Tartarus*; and tho' they thought that the Souls of good and bad Men were lodged in seperate Mansions, the Good in *Elysium*, and the Bad in *Tartarus*; yet they suppos'd that the Souls of all Men, both good and bad, were lodged in *Hades*, of which *Elysium* made one Part and *Tartarus* another. So that among them *Hades* did not signify a Place of Torment only, as now a-days Hell does among us; but it had a larger and more general Signification, denoting the invisible Region, which receiv'd all departed Souls of Men and Women, and was very frequently used by them in a good Sense, as well as in a bad one. This was the Doctrine of the Pagans. Let us now see how far the Christian Divinity agrees or disagrees with it; that we may be able distinctly to understand that

Article

Article of our Creed which affirms that
Christ descended into Hell.

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Now it must be acknowledg'd to be
very consonant to the Christian Doctrine
to assert, That the Souls of all Men,
when they are separated from their Bo-
dies, depart into some Region or other
unknown and invisible to us. Since
therefore the Word *Ades* does properly
signify such an invisible Region; since
the antient *Grecians* did commonly use
it in that Signification; since the Seventy
Interpreters, and after them the inspired
Penmen of the *New Testament* borrowed
it from the *Grecians*, to express by it the
State of separate Souls; What can be
more reasonable than to suppose that
they used it in its known and vulgar Sig-
nification, and in the same Latitude as
did the *Grecians* from whom they took
it? *viz.* To signify that invisible Place
which is the Receptacle of all the sepe-
rate Spirits of Mankind. It is certain
that the Writers of the Christian Church
for several Centuries after Christ took the
Word in this general Sense. For they
fre-

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frequently affirm not only wicked Men, but *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Samuel* and the rest of the antient Patriarchs and Prophets to have been in *Hades*. There is therefore no Reason to doubt, but that the Scripture uses the Word *Hades* in this comprehensive and general Sense, since it bore this Sense all the World over, not only before, but many hundred Years after the coming of Christ, not only among the Heathens, but among the Christians also.

FROM what hath been already said we may collect what it is we profess to believe, when we repeat that Clause of our Creed, *He descended into Hell, or Hades*; which Words mean nothing more than this, That the Soul of Jesus Christ, after it was seperated from his Body, did pass into some invisible Place, appointed for the Reception of the Souls of Mankind after Death. A Truth which was never so much as question'd in the Primitive Church; for tho' the antient Writers differ from one another in relating what our Lord did when he was in *Hades*,

Hades; yet they do all with one Consent affirm, that he went thither. And indeed had the Scripture said nothing at all of this Matter, yet would it have been highly reasonable to have believ'd, That the Soul of Christ after its Separation from the Body, was dispos'd of in the same manner as the Souls of other Men. For since our Lord took upon him our Nature and Condition, with all the Frailties and Inconveniencies of it; and was all his Life-time subject to Hunger and Thirst, to Weariness, Pain and Grief, as other Men are, and at last underwent the Stroke of Death, as all other Men do; there seems to be no Room to doubt, but that when he was dead he submitted to the Law of Death, and went to the Place to which the Spirits of all other Men go.

BUT taking it for certain, as we well may, that Christ did go down into Hell or *Hades*; there arises another Question, Into what Part of *Hades* our Lord went; whether into that Part which is inhabited by the Spirits of good Men, or into that which is inhabited by the Spirits of evil

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Men? Now it is, I think, clear from the Scripture, that our Lord descended into that Part of *Hades*, which is the Mansion of good Spirits. For when the penitent Thief on the Cross requested to be remembered by our Lord when he should come into his Kingdom, our Lord thus replies to him, *This Day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*. As then the Text assures us, that the Soul of Christ was in *Hades*; so from these Words of our Lord to the penitent Thief it plainly appears, that he went after Death to Paradise; and from both these Texts it is very natural to conclude, That Paradise is a Part of *Hades*, and to be sure that Part of it which is the Habitation of the Souls of good Men, and which the Heathens called *Elysium*. For Paradise is a Hebrew Word, and signifies a Pleasure Garden, a Region planted with Groves of Myrtle, which answers the Description given by the antient Poets of their *Elysium*. So that the Scripture teaches us to believe that Jesus Christ when he died went into *Hades*, and more particularly into that

Divi-

Division of it which is known by the Name of Paradise. This would have been very credible, tho' the Scripture had been silent about it; for tho' our Lord suffered the Death of a Malefactor, yet since he died perfectly innocent and sinless, his Soul was of course to go to Paradise, whither go the Souls of all just and holy Men.

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As to the other Division of *Hades*, in which are imprison'd the fallen Angels, and the Spirits of evil Men, until the Day of Judgment; St. Peter, I think, warrants us to call it by the very same Name which it had among the *Pagans*, i. e. *Tartarus*. For he tells us in the 11th Chapter of his 1st Epistle, God spared not the Angels that sinned, but cast them down to Hell; in the Original it is, *Tartarōus*, He cast them down to *Tartarus*.

THAT Christ went also into this Part of *Hades* is affirm'd by some Christian Writers, who teach, That Christ went not only among the happy, but also among the unhappy Souls, and preach'd the

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— Gospel of Salvation to them; and that
 — when he ascended from *Hades*, he
 — brought along with him not only the
 Souls of the Righteous, but a great number of the Wicked, say some, all of them say others, and translated them to Heaven. For which Doctrine there is, I think, no manner of Proof.

BUT from some Expressions of St. *Peter* in his 1st Epistle, alluding perhaps to a Passage formerly extant in the Prophecy of *Jeremiah*, but missing in our present Copies, and from some antient Authorities in and near the Times of the Apostles, it seems probable that when our Lord went to the Mansions of happy Spirits, he made known to them the Way of Salvation. If this be admitted, it will perhaps help us to the best Solution of a difficult Question concerning the Salvation of Persons who have liv'd Vertuously or died true Penitents, without ever having an Opportunity of embracing the Faith of the Gospel. There is also Ground to believe, that when our Lord returned from those Mansions, he brought with him

him a number of the Faithful, and having restored to them their Bodies, carried them up with him into Heaven. For ———
St. *Matthew* assures us, that the Graves — SIRM.
were opened, and many Bodies of Saints — V.
which slept, arose, and came out of the —
Graves after his Resurrection, and appear'd unto many. And in an antient Account of *Thaddeus* his Preaching at *Edeffa* soon after our Lord's Ascension, *Thaddeus* is introduc'd expounding to them among other Things, How Christ descended into Hell, and rent asunder the Pale which had never been rent before; How he rose again, and together with himself rais'd those from the Dead who had slept many Ages; How he descended from Heaven alone, but ascended to his Father with a great Multitude.

THAT Christ releas'd from *Hades* the Souls of all Men, or of all the Righteous, the most antient of the Christian Writers do not teach; but they do on the contrary affirm, That the Spirits of all, &c. of the Generality of Men, both Good

— and Bad, do continue there until the Re-
 SERM. surrection; which Opinion is, I think,
 V. — most consonant to the Holy Scriptures.

AND indeed herein the Christian Doctrine differs from that of the *Pagans*. The *Pagans* taught, that the Souls of Men when they departed this Life were convey'd to *Hades*, where they were summon'd to render an Account of their Actions at the Tribunal of certain Judges. They who upon their Tryal were acquitted, were conducted to *Elysium*, where they liv'd joyously and happily; and they who were condemn'd were carried to *Tartarus*, where they suffer'd for their past Offences. The *Pagans* did not expect any Resurrection of the Body, nor any general Judgment of Mankind at the End of the World; but they imagined that the Souls of Men were judg'd in *Hades* immediately as they came thither, and that *Hades* was the Place in which Men were finally rewarded and punished; and that the Rewards and Punishments of Men commenc'd presently after Death.

BUT

BUT the Christian Doctrine is, That ———
the Souls of all Men are immediately SERM.
after Death convey'd to *Hades*, not there V.
to be finally rewarded or punished, but ———
to be reserved there, as their Bodies like-
wise shall be in the Grave, until the last
Day; when the Souls of all Men shall
again be united to their Bodies, and all
Mankind shall be judged together at the
Tribunal of Christ according to their
Works. They that have done Good
shall be translated to Heaven, and there
enjoy compleat and perpetual Felicity;
and they that have done Evil, shall be
everlastingly tormented in Fire un-
quenchable, which shall be kindled in a
Place called in the *New Testament* Γέννα,
which is a Greek Word compounded of
two Hebrew ones, signifying the Valley
of *Hinnom*. This Valley of *Hinnom* was
a Vale in *Judea*, in which the idolatrous
Jews were wont to offer their Children
by Fire unto *Moloch*. From the fierce
Fires which were kept there, and the
dreadful Shrieks and Sufferings of those
who were there sacrificed, the sacred

— SERM. Penmen took Occasion to name the Place
 V. in which Sinners shall be punished by
 — Fire to all Eternity, *Géenna* or the Valley
 of *Hinnom*.

I AM sensible that of late Ages the prevailing Opinion has been, That the Saints, as soon as they dye, pass into Heaven, and are admitted to the beaťne Vision; and that the Wicked do immediately after Death receive the Punishment due to their Transgressions. But, as I said before, this Opinion is repugnant not only to the Sentiments of the first Christians, but also to the plain Declarations of Scripture. For therein we are informed, That at the End of the World, and not till then, all Men shall arise to Judgment. But to what Purpose will the Judgment of the great Day be appointed, if before that Time good Men shall be actually enter'd upon their Happiness, and wicked Men upon their Misery? The Judgment is plainly in order to the Distribution of Rewards and Punishments; and therefore the Distribution of them must follow and not precede

cede the Judgment. To reward and
punish Men first, and to bring them up-
on their Tryal afterwards, seems not to
be so regular a Method of Proceeding.

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V.

I do allow nevertheless that the Wicked
as soon as ever they depart out of this
Life are in a very uneasy and unhappy
State; which is occasioned partly by the
want of those Pleasures and Enjoyments
in which they plac'd their chief Happi-
ness here, partly by those disorderly
Passions and Affections which they carry
along with them out of this World, and
partly, and I suppose principally, by
the Apprehension of God's Wrath which
is incens'd against them, and of those
terrible Pains which they know will be
inflicted on them after the Judgment of
the great Day. But that those Pains are
inflicted on them before the Day of Judg-
ment does not appear from Scripture.
It is (too) far from being certain, that
the Place in which the Souls of the Wic-
ked are lodged till the Day of Judgment
is the same with that in which they shall
endure Punishment afterward. For they
are

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are at present in *Hades*; and St. *John*, in the xxth Chapter of the *Revelation* at the 14th Verse, seems plainly enough to distinguish *Hades* from Hell-Fire; when he says, that *Death and Hell*, or *Hades*, were cast into the Lake of Fire. From *Hades* the Wicked shall be brought at the last Day to the Judgment Seat of Christ, and then, and not before, shall Christ say to them, Depart from me ye Cursed into everlasting Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels. Which Angels do not as yet feel the Fire that is prepared for them, but, as both St. *Peter* and St. *Jude* expressly declare, they are reserv'd in Chains of Darknes unto the Judgment of the great Day. And therefore the Devils at the approach of our Blessed Saviour cried out, saying, *What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the Time?* How unreasonable is it then to imagine, that the Souls of wicked Men are immediately after Death plung'd into everlasting Fire, when the fallen Angels, for whom that Fire was

originally prepar'd, shall not be consign-
ed to it till after the last Judgment?

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It is confess'd too, that the Saints, as soon as they depart this Life, are in a very comfortable and happy State. They rest from the Labours and Troubles and Sorrows of this mortal Life; They carry with them such Dispositions and Habits of Mind as tend to secure its Peace and Tranquility; They have a firm Trust in Almighty God, that he will protect them from the Insults of the Devil, who, tho' he be said in Scripture to be the Ruler of the Darkeness of this World, and the Prince of the Air, and to have the Power of Death, is yet so restrain'd, as that he cannot hurt or molest any Person without the Divine Permission. They have a lively Sense of God's Favour and Love to them, and are fully assur'd that they shall not always continue in that State of Seperation, but shall in due Time be made Partakers of a blessed Resurrection, when they shall be removed to Heaven, there to reign with Christ, and enjoy consummate Happiness,

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— — — — — pinefs, which fhall never have an End.
 But that they do already enjoy this perfect Happinefs cannot be admitted; fince the Scripture declares that good Men fhall be recompensed at the Refurrection of the Juft, and that the Lord the righteous Judge fhall give a Crown of Glory to all them that love his Appearing; and many other Texts there are to the fame Purpofe. The Disciple is not greater than his Mafter, nor the Servant than his Lord. Now Jefus Chrift himfelf, our Lord and Mafter, did not afcend into Heaven till after his Refurrection. During the Time that his Body was in the Grave, his Soul was in Paradiſe, a Part of *Hades*. Wherefore he himfelf ſoon after his Refurrection faith to *Mary Magdalen*, *Touch me not, for I am not yet afcended*, ἔτι οὐκ ἀναβέβηκα. I have not yet afcended unto my Father. And that the Condition of our Lord in *Hades* was ſuch, as I have already deſcribed the State of departed Saints to be, is evident from that Paſſage of Scripture, of which my Text is a part. For there

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our Lord is represented as in a State of Rest and Comfort, as having a firm Confidence in the Protection and Favour of the Almighty, as rejoycing in the Hope that he should not long continue in that State, but that he should be soon rais'd from the Dead, and admitted to the immediate Presence of his Heavenly Father, where he should for ever enjoy the most consummate Bliss and Happiness. For the Psalmist introduces our Saviour speaking thus; *I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right Hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my Heart is glad, and my Glory rejoiceth; my Flesh also shall rest in Hope. For thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hades, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see Corruption. Thou wilt shew me the Path of Life: in thy Presence is Fulness of Joy, at thy right Hand there are Pleasures for evermore.*

THUS much may suffice for the Explication of the Text, and of the Context immediately preceding and following it, which was the first Thing I propos'd

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to do; and in order to which it was necessary for me to say something of the State of seperate Souls till the Resurrection.

BEFORE I proceed to the second Head of Discourse, I shall only observe that tho' the English Word *Hell* does at present bear only a bad Sense, and is used to denote a Place of Torment, yet in its original Signification it exactly answers to the Greek Word *Hades*. For it is derived from an old Word *Hele*, which is still in use among some, and signifies to cover, or to conceal from Sight; and therefore *Hell* was as proper a Name as *Hades*, for that hidden and invisible Place which is the Habitation of all departed Souls. In this Sense that good Man and glorious Martyr Mr. Tindall used the Word *Hell*, in his Translation of the *Psalms*; which is still read in the publick Service of our Church; *Psf. LXXXIX. V. 48. What Man is he that liveth, and shall not see Death: and shall he deliver his Soul from the Hand of Hell?* Which Words plainly imply, that the

Souls

Souls of all Men after Death go to Hell; SERM.
V.
but it is certain that the Souls of all Men do not go to Hell in the bad Sense of the Word; and therefore it is manifest, that in this Passage the Word Hell bears a more general Signification, and denotes, as doth the Greek *Hades*, that invisible Place which is the common Receptacle of all seperate Souls both good and evil.

I COME now, as I propos'd, in the second Place, to confirm the Doctrine contain'd in the Text, which may be reduced to these two Propositions.

First, **THAT** the Soul of Christ did at his Death go down into Hell, leaving his Body liable to Corruption.

Secondly, **THAT** the Soul of Christ did not long continue in that State, but was releas'd from thence, and re-united to the Body, before that the Body saw Corruption.

I NEED add nothing more to what I have already said concerning the first of these. The Enemies of Christianity do not deny that Christ died; and that after Death his Soul went down into Hell, and his

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his Body into the Grave. It is the Doctrine of his Resurrection which they think themselves concern'd to oppose; and therefore they affirm, what the Text denies, That his Soul is still left in Hell, and that his Body hath seen Corruption. In Opposition to these Men I might proceed to shew, that there is very clear and full Evidence that Jesus Christ was indeed raised again from the Dead, as his Disciples always believ'd him to have been. But having already prevented myself on this Argument in a former Discourse, wherein the Evidences of Christ's Resurrection have been produc'd and considered, I shall, to avoid Repetition, beg Leave to refer my Reader to what has there been offered; and proceed in the

Third and last Place, To draw some useful Inferences from the Doctrine which hath been now delivered. And,

First, THE Resurrection of Christ is a plain Demonstration of the Divinity of the Christian Religion, and furnishes us with a satisfactory Answer to the Ob-
jection

jection which *Jews* and Heathens have
rais'd against it, from his Crucifixion. ———
We remember, say the Chief Priests and SERM.
Pharisees, that *that* Deceiver said, while V.
he was yet alive, After three Days I will
rise again. The fulfilling of these Words
say the Christians, sets it beyond all Dis-
pute that he was a true Man, and no
Deceiver. The raising him to Life, after
his Body had hung six Hours upon the
Cross, and his Side had been pierc'd with
a Spear, so that out of it flow'd both
Blood and Water, was evidently the
Work of God; And will our Adversaries
charge God with setting his Seal to a Lye,
and working Miracles to confirm the Doc-
trine of an Impostor? The *Jews* them-
selves promised to believe on him, if he
would come down from the Cross; And
can they blame us Christians for believing
on him, now that he is come out of his
Grave? They think it strange that we
should believe a Person to be the Son of
God, whom we allow, as often as we
repeat our *Creed*, to have been crucified,
dead and buried. Let them add what
L follows,

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follows, The third Day he rose again; and there is nothing strange in it. For if he was crucified thro' Weakness, he was declar'd to be the Son of God with Power by the Resurrection of the Dead. The Crucifixion and Death of Christ had indeed been an unanswerable Objection to his Doctrine, had his History ended there. But now well may Christians proclaim the Death of their Master, well may they glory in the Cross, since they know and can prove, that *He*, who died on it, liveth for evermore.

Secondly, THE Resurrection of Christ from the Dead lays us under the strongest Obligation to rise to a Life of Holiness. The Scripture frequently presseth upon us a Conformity to Christ's Death and Resurrection. And the Rites antiently us'd in Baptism were very significant of the Death and Burial and Resurrection of Christ, and of a Christian's professing Conformity to them. The baptized Person by going under the Water represented the Death and Burial of Christ, and engag'd to dye himself unto Sin, and by
ascen-

ascending out of the Water he represented the Resurrection of Christ, and engag'd to rise himself to a spiritual Life. To this Custom the Apostle St. Paul manifestly alludes, *Rom. vi. V. 3, 4.* and thus argues from it: *Know ye not that so many of us as were baptiz'd into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his Death? Therefore we are buried with him by Baptism into Death; that like as Christ was raised up from the Dead by the Glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in Newness of Life.* If we then be risen with Christ, let us not behave ourselves as those who are still dead in Trespases and Sins; but let us seek the Things that are Above, where Christ sitteth at the right Hand of God. Knowing that as Christ being raised from the Dead, dyeth no more; Death hath no more Dominion over him: Even so we also, being raised from the Death of Sin, should not relapse into it, but should henceforth live unto God.

Thirdly, THE Resurrection of our Lord assures us of the Remission of our

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Sins. For if God had not accepted the Satisfaction which he made by his Death for the Sins of the World, he would not have rais'd him from the Dead. By our Sins we were become Debtors to the Divine Justice; Jesus Christ became our Surety, and took our Debt upon himself; and the releasing our Surety, shews that our Debt is discharg'd. Wherefore St. Paul argues, *That Christ was deliver'd for our Offences, and rose again for our Justification.*

Fourthly, THE Resurrection of Jesus Christ is a Pledge and Assurance of our Resurrection. For therefore Christ both died and reviv'd; that he might be Lord both of the Dead and Living; that he might be invested with all Power in Heaven and in Earth; one Branch of which Power is to quicken the Dead. There is a near Relation, a close and intimate Union between Christ and true Believers; insomuch that they constitute one mystical Body, whereof *He* is the Head, and they are the Members. And if the Head be partaker of immortal Life,
without

without doubt *that* Life shall be communicated unto the Members. *He* to whom the Father hath given to have Life in himself, will not suffer Death for ever to have Dominion over those, who by eating that Bread which is his Body, and by drinking of the Cup which is his Blood, are become as it were one Body and one Blood with him. Being then so nearly related to Him, we may confidently rely upon the Promise which he made to his Apostles, and in them to us, *Because I live, ye shall live also.*

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V.

Lastly. THE Consideration of Christ's Descent into *Hades* and into the Grave, is of great Use to fortify us against the Fear of Death. For by entering upon the State of Separation, he hath sanctified that State to us; and by delivering himself from it, he hath opened the Way for our Deliverance. Why then should we be loth to try a Condition, which our Lord himself experienc'd; and by Experience found it to be a State of Peace and Joy? Why should we not be forward and desirous to visit the Place, where the

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V.

Captain of our Salvation hath been before us? Even there the Lord shall be our Shepherd, and shall lead us forth beside the Waters of Comfort. Tho' we walk thro' the Valley of the Shadow of Death, we need fear no Evil, because his Staff shall support and comfort us. *He* who was at the right Hand of Christ while he continued in *Hades*, shall be at ours also, that we may not be moved. And tho' we may not hope to be so speedily releas'd from thence, as our Lord was; yet shall our Hearts rejoyce, and our Flesh also shall rest in Hope. Because God will not always leave our Souls in *Hades*, neither will he suffer his holy ones to see Corruption for ever. But in his due Time he will shew us the Path of eternal Life; He will admit us into his immediate Presence, where is Fulness of Joy; and will place us at his right Hand, where are Pleasures for evermore.

Even so, Amen; O God and Father of Spirits, for the Sake of thine only Son, our Blessed Saviour and Redeemer, who

of Christ into Hell.

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*to this End, died, and rose, and reviv'd,
that he might be Lord both of the Dead
and Living; Who by his Death hath
destroy'd Death, and by his Resurrection
hath restor'd to us everlasting Life.*

Unto him be ascrib'd, &c.

SERM.

V.

L 4 S E R M.

S E R M O N VI.
Of the Exaltation of
Christ.

PHIL. II. 9, 10, 11.

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name which is above every Name:

That at the Name of Jesus every Knee should bow, of Things in Heaven, and Things in Earth, and Things under the Earth;

And that every Tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.

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VI.

THE Principal Objection which the Jews had against our Saviour, and upon which they mainly relied, to justify their

their obstinate Infidelity, was the low
and suffering Condition in which he chose
to appear during his Abode upon Earth. SERM.
VI.
Hence they argued, that he did not
answer the glorious Characters and De-
scriptions which the antient Prophets had
given of the Messiah; and that therefore
he was to be rejected, and treated as an
Impostor.

AND indeed it is undeniable, that
there was promised to the People of God
a Messiah, *Upon whose Shoulder the Go-* II. ix. 6,
vernment should be; and whose Name 7
should be called Wonderful, Counsellor,
The mighty God, The everlasting Father,
The Prince of Peace. Of the Increase
of whose Government and Peace there
should be no End, upon the Throne of
David and upon his Kingdom, to order it,
and to establish it with Judgment and
with Justice for ever. The Rod of whose PS. cx. 2;
Power should be sent out of Sion, and
who should be Ruler in the midst of his
Enemies. Unto whom should be given Dan. vii.
Dominion and Glory and a Kingdom, that 14.
all

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all People, Nations and Languages should serve him; Whose Dominion should be an everlasting Dominion, which should not pass away, and his Kingdom that which should not be destroy'd. — These and other Passages in the Prophets to the like Purpose, misunderstood, had rais'd in the Jews an Expectation of a mighty temporal Prince, who should break the Roman Yoke from off their Neck, extend his Conquests to the utmost Corners of the Earth, and reduce all Nations to be Servants and Tributaries to him. It was doubtless the Byass of their own carnal and worldly Minds, an eager Desire of Riches and Honours that carried them to embrace this Interpretation; since it was utterly inconsistent with the plain Meaning of other Texts in the Prophets (too many and too long to be here recited,) which clearly foretold that the Messiah should be a Person of obscure and mean Condition in the World; that he should meet with very contemptuous and despiteful Usage, with many Troubles and

Sor-

Sorrows; to all which at length a Period
should be put by an unnatural and pain-
ful Death.

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To reconcile this Contradiction some
learned *Jews* fancied that there should
be two Messiahs; one that should be
despis'd, persecuted and slain; and an-
other, that should reign and triumph.
Whereas it is manifest from the whole
Tenor of the Prophecies, diligently con-
sidered and compar'd together, and par-
ticularly from the *LIId* Chapter of *Isaiah*,
That the same Person was to suffer and
to triumph; That he was first to suffer,
and afterwards, in Consideration of his
Sufferings, to be rais'd to high Honours,
and all his Enterprizes to be crown'd
with Success and Victory.

BUT the Generality of the *Jews*, and
among them our Lord's own Disciples,
quite overlook'd those Predictions which
related to the Sufferings of their Messiah.
The bright Side of the Prophecies, which,
as they imagin'd, gave them a Prospect
of rising to very honourable and profi-
table Preferments, and of domineering
over

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over the rest of the World, had so dazzled their Eyes, that the black and dark Side of the Predictions was not visible to them.

Luke ix.
46.

THIS same Leaven of Pride and Ambition, set on working by the same groundless Expectation of the temporal Grandeur and Power of the Messiah, had so swelled and blowed up the Apostles themselves, that, as despicable a Figure as their Master and they then made, they quarrell'd among themselves which of them should be greatest. And the two Sons of Zebedee in particular petitioned their Lord, *That they might sit, the one on his right Hand, and the other on his left, in his Kingdom*: At which the Ten were moved with Indignation. And tho' our Lord, on purpose to discountenance and beat down this aspiring Spirit in his Disciples, and to root out of their Minds that Opinion which nourish'd and fomented it, had told them over and over in as plain and express Terms as a Man could use, *That he should be delivered unto the Gentiles,*
and

and should be mock'd, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on; and that they should scourge him, and put him to Death; yet so deep an Impression had this Notion made upon them, so firmly were they perswaded of the Truth of it, and to such a degree were they blinded by it, that as St. Luke observes, *They understood none of these Things; and this Saying was hid from them, neither knew they the Things which were spoken,* Luke XVIII. 34.

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AND when all these Things had happen'd to our Lord, just as he had foretold them, we find that the Disciples were strangely disappointed of their Hopes, and that they suspected they had been deceiv'd; not in the Opinion which they had entertain'd of the Christ that was to come into the World, but in believing that their Master was the Christ. Thus much the two Disciples going to *Emmaus* did ingenuously confess, in the Conclusion of the Relation they made of their Lord's Passion and Death; *We* Luke *trusted, say they, that it had been he* xxiv. 21. *who*

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who should have redeem'd Israel. Whereupon our Saviour severely upbraids them with their Dulness and Stupidity, occasioned by the partial Regard they had to some Prophecies more than to others; *O Fools, and slow of Heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken; Ought not Christ to have suffered these Things, and to enter into his Glory.*

So that the Meanness of our Saviour's Circumstances, and the barbarous Treatment he met with whilst he was upon Earth, were so far from being a just Ground of Exception against him, that they were an Evidence that he was the Person he pretended to be; and without this Evidence he could never have given satisfactory Proof, that he was indeed that Person. As, on the other hand, it would have been an unanswerable Objection against the Truth of his Pretensions, if the Predictions concerning the Glory of the Messiah had not in due Time and Place receiv'd a full Completion in him. But after his Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven, and his sending

sending down the Holy Ghost upon his Apostles; Matters of Fact that were attested by many Eye-witnesses, who laid down their Lives in Confirmation of their Testimony; after these Facts, no Room was left for this Objection; since, as the Humiliation and Sufferings of our Saviour, recorded by the Evangelists, did in every Circumstance exactly answer the prophetic Descriptions of them: So the glorious Majesty, with which he was invested upon his Ascension, and which he still is and always shall be possess'd of, as it is represented in my Text, and in other Places of the *New Testament*, does not at all fall short of the Fame which the Prophets had for several Ages before spread of it; and beyond all Comparison exceeds what the *Jews* had conceiv'd of the Glory and Kingdom of their Messiah.

For he is constituted Lord and Governour not of the Earth alone, but of the Universe, and all the Creatures in it.

By Men Prayer is to be made unto him, Ps. lxxii.

and daily is he to be praised. *All the* Heb. i. 6
Angels

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Angels of God are commanded to worship him; the Devils too, those Sons of Pride, are forc'd to stoop to him, and, even while they fight against him, to acknowledge his Superiority over them. His Name, that is, his Title, his Authority, his Glory, is above every Name; and his Dominion is extended over Things or Persons in Heaven and in Earth, and under the Earth; All these are by God put under Him, and oblig'd willingly or unwillingly to submit to his Authority, and to acknowledge their Subjection to it; to bow the Knee at his Name, and to confess with the Tongue that he is Lord.

Nor that God the Father hath parted with any Power or Authority belonging to him; but he has only put the Execution and Administration of it into the Hands of his Son. Nor doth it from hence follow that there are two Gods, or two Lords and Governours of the Universe, any more than that there are two Kings in a Country, where the King governs by the Ministry of his Son.

The

The Subordination of the Son to the Father preserves the Monarchy intire; And the Father may be very properly said to be the sole Lord and Governout of the World, while the Son himself, to whom the Administration of the Government is committed, doth all Things in Conformity and Obedience to the Father's Will, and directeth all his Actions to the Father's Glory.

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Now our Lord was thus highly exalted, because, as the Apostle tells us in the Words before my Text, *He being in the Form of God emptied himself, and took on him the Form of a Servant, and was made in the Likeness of Men; And being found in Fashion as a Man, He humbled himself and became obedient to Death, even the Death of the Cross.* So that this high Honour conferr'd upon our Lord was the Reward of his great Services and Merits. And from the Accounts which the Scripture elsewhere gives us of his consummate Wisdom and Almighty Power, of his unerring Justice and unbounded Goodness, it appears that

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he is every Way equal to the Trust committed to him, and very capable of discharging all the Parts of his Office in his exalted Station. — What they are I am now briefly to consider; beginning first with the Intercession made by Him for us at the right Hand of his Father; which tho' it be properly an Act of his Priestly, and not of his Kingly Office, yet ought not to be here omitted, considering that it both speaks the superlative Dignity of the Intercessor, and is of the greatest and nearest Importance to us.

FOR the Priesthood which Christ exerciseth in Heaven is a Royal Priesthood; and the Intercession which he there makes is a powerful and glorious one; an Intercession always prevalent and effectual; founded upon the Redemption which he hath wrought for Mankind, and the full Satisfaction he hath made to the Divine Justice for our Sins. It moreover consists in representing to his Father his Sufferings on Earth, and pleading the infinite Merit of them, and claiming for us

all

all those inestimable Benefits, which by his precious Blood-shedding he hath purchased for all such as will accept of them upon the Terms on which he offers them.

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By Virtue of this Mediation alone all our Prayers are acceptable to Almighty God, and become effectual to the Purposes aimed at by them. Wherefore our blessed Saviour hath instructed us, and pursuant to this Instruction our Church hath in her Liturgy directed us, to put up our Petitions to God in his Name; there being no access to the Father but thro' Him. Nay it is clear, that not only Men, but Angels themselves are oblig'd to make use of his Name in their Addresses to God; if, in the Text, instead of *at the Name of Jesus*, we read, as some agreeably enough to the Original do read, *In the Name of Jesus every Knee should bow, of Things in Heaven, and Things in Earth, and Things under the Earth*; Understanding by Things under the Earth, Holy Men and Women departed this Life.

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THE Kingly Office of Christ consists in enacting and publishing Laws for the Government of his Church; in protecting and rewarding his faithful Subjects, and in subduing and destroying his Enemies.

IN order to shew how much superior the Legislative Authority of Christ is to that of any Earthly Lawgivers, how far his Name is in this respect above every Name, I need only point out some remarkable Differences between his Laws and those of Civil Magistrates; which Differences arise from the Difference there is between *His* and their Power.

HUMAN Laws oblige no farther than they are consistent with the Laws of Christ. But Christ being the Prince of the Kings of the Earth, a Lawgiver to whom all Human Lawgivers are themselves subject, his Laws bind the Conscience in Opposition to Human Laws, of which they ought to be the Rule and Measure.

Again, HUMAN Laws reach only the Words and Actions of Men; they cannot

cannot take Cognisance of what passes in the Mind, and proceeds no further. But it being the Prerogative of Christ to search the Heart, his Laws prescribe Rules to the most secret Motions and Tendencies of it, laying as strict Restraints upon our Thoughts as upon our outward Behaviour, and rendring us as accountable and as liable to Punishment for our Intentions as for our Deeds.

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Lastly, THE strongest Sanctions of human Laws are Pains that extend to the Body only, and to that only in this Life; nor is it always in the Power of Magistrates to inflict them. But Christ has threatned to the Breach of his Laws extreme and everlasting Misery both of Body and Soul, and is arm'd with Almighty Power to make good his Word. He has secur'd the Obedience of his Subjects by the Terror of a Sentence, the most dreadful to human Nature; and in case of Disobedience, will not fail to vindicate the Honour of his Laws by the Execution of that Sentence.

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FOR the Publication of his Laws, our Lord did, in a very surprizing Manner send down the Holy Ghost upon his Apostles, to endow them with the Gift of Tongues, and other miraculous Powers and Graces; whereby they were qualified to proclaim to all Nations his everlasting Gospel, and at the same time to demonstrate the Truth and Divinity of it. The same Spirit which wrought mightily in the Preachers of the Gospel, operated as powerfully in the Hearers of it; enlightning their Understandings, that they might rightly apprehend it, and disposing their Wills to embrace and obey it. And so in a short time Multitudes of People were every where brought to the Knowledge and under the Power of the Gospel-Law, and the Kingdoms of the World became the Kingdoms of Christ.

THAT this munificent Distribution of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost was an Act of Royal Power appears from the Necessity there was of his being actually possess'd of his Kingdom in order to it.

If

If I go not away, says our Saviour to his Disciples, *the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.* SERM. VI.

Accordingly, when Christ Jo. xvi. 7. had ascended up on high to the Throne of his Kingdom, leading Captivity Captive, he gave these Gifts unto Men; As earthly Potentates are wont, on the Day of their Inauguration, or upon the Solemnity of a Triumph, to distribute Largesses among their Subjects and Soldiers.

AND tho' such extraordinary Kinds and Degrees of Grace are not now to be expected, there not being the same urgent Occasion for them; yet our Lord still continues to dispense both to Ministers and People such Measures of his Spirit as are sufficient to open the Eyes and subdue the Hearts of Men; *To deliver them from the Power of Darknes,* and to *translate* them into his own Kingdom.

THE Subjects whom Christ thus gains, he carefully protects against *his* and their Enemies. From Sin and Temptation he

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delivers them by the Succours of his All-sufficient Grace: and from the malicious Violence of wicked Men and Devils by the irresistible Strength of his Right Hand. If for a Time he permits his Enemies to vex and molest his Church, yet will he not suffer them to prevail against it. In due Season he will interpose, not only to restrain their Fury, but he will convert it to his Praise, and get himself Honour upon his Adversaries by their total overthrow. Thus he destroyed those Haters of him and his Followers the *Jews*, by the Sword of the *Romans*; and afterwards the *Romans* themselves by Inundations of barbarous Nations. And thus also before the End of the World he shall destroy all other Antichrists, who shall set themselves to oppose Him and his Truth.

THE last Enemy that shall remain unsubdued is Death. But over this mighty Conqueror shall Christ triumph at the great Day of the general Resurrection; when at his Command the Prison-Doors of the Grave shall be unlock'd,
and

and the Captives of a Thousand Years shall be set free, and they that have slept in the Dust for many Ages shall be awaken'd, and shall see the Lord Christ coming in the Clouds of Heaven with Power and great Glory, to judge all Men for what they have done in the Body, by those Laws which he ordain'd to be the Rule of their Actions. Those who have been careful to live by this Rule, he shall graciously acquit, and place them with his Elect Angels in a State of Immortality and consummate Happiness, beyond the Possibility and beyond the Fear of ever relapsing into Sin or Misery. Those that have been disobedient and rebellious, he shall consign over to the most exquisite Torments, prepar'd for the Devil and his Angels; which they shall for ever endure without Remedy or Hope.

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THE Time being come when all Christ's Saints that ever liv'd on Earth shall be translated to Heaven, and made perfect in Glory; and when all his Enemies shall be utterly and finally destroyed;

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stroy'd; then all those Parts of Christ's Royal Authority, which relate to the Government and Protection of his Church on Earth, and to the Subduing his Enemies, shall of Course expire; because the End for which those Powers were committed to him will then be accomplished, and there will be no further Need or Use of them. Yet we are not to imagine, that Jesus Christ shall then cease to be Lord. He will always continue to be Head of the Church Triumphant, consisting of glorified Saints and Angels; and they shall continue to obey and worship him as their Lord and King for evermore. For the Apostle to the *Hebrews* hath told us from the Psalmist, *That his Throne is for ever and ever: And the Angel Gabriel assur'd the blessed Virgin his Mother, That of his Kingdom there should be no End.*

Heb. i.
8.

THUS have I endeavour'd, as plainly and as briefly as I could, to shew the Nature, Extent and Duration of Christ's Kingdom; what his Office and Employment is, in his present State of Exaltation;

tation; for what Cause he was exalted; how the Scandal of the Cross was thereby remov'd, and the antient Prophecies fulfill'd. By all which the Truth and Justice and Goodness and Wisdom of Almighty God, were in a very signal Manner display'd and illustrated; and therefore it is, that every Tongue must confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.

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THE Doctrine which has now been delivered cannot fail of having a very useful and powerful Influence upon the Hearts and Lives of all those who will seriously weigh and consider it, and duly attend to the Consequences of it. For,

First, If Christ be our Lord, and we his Subjects, then we undoubtedly owe him Allegiance and Service. We cannot expect that he should protect and reward us, unless we do him Homage, and yield him Obedience. In Default of these Returns, we lose our Claim to the Advantages and Privileges belonging to the Subjects of Christ's Kingdom; we
cease

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— cease to be the Citizens of Heaven, and
 — forfeit all Right and Title to an incor-
 — ruptible Inheritance there; which is pro-
 — mis'd to us and settled upon us on this
 Condition, That we continue stedfast in
 our Loyalty and Duty to our Prince.

THE Words of my Text did probably
 give rise, as they certainly do give War-
 rant and Countenance, to a Custom still
 retain'd among us, of Bowing at the
 Name of Jesus, as often as we solemnly
 repeat our Creed, in Token of Reve-
 rence, and of our willing Submission to
 his Authority. And surely if ever in
 any Act of Religious Worship it be al-
 lowable, if ever it be proper and decent,
 to bow our Knee at the Name of Jesus,
 it must be so then, when our Tongues
 confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

BUT we must remember, that it will
 not be sufficient to pay him an outward
 formal Homage, to bow the Head, and
 bend the Knee to him, to complement
 him with the Title of a King, and to
 profess ourselves his Subjects, unless we
 take Care that our whole Conduct and
 Beha-

Behaviour be answerable to such a Profession. The only Demonstration we can give that we own his Authority over us, is an exact Conformity to the Laws which he hath bound upon us. To bow the Knee at the Name of Jesus, and to confess with our Tongues that he is Lord, if at the same time we live in a wilful and habitual Violation of his Laws, is a most provoking Mockery; it is to treat him no better than the Soldiers did, who, before they led him away to be crucified, put on him a purple Robe, and bowed the Knee before him, saying, Hail King of the Jews. The Regal Power with which Christ is invested, ought to be Matter of Terror to all those, who tho' in Words they acknowledge it, and pretend to submit to it, yet in Works disclaim and resist it; since it is one Branch of this Power to take Vengeance on disobedient and traitorous Subjects, as well as on open and declar'd Enemies. And *they* who call Christ *Lord, Lord*, but will not do the Things which he says, shall be as severely
and

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and rigorously dealt with as those, who more boldly and plainly say, We will not have this Man to reign over us.

Secondly, THE Consideration of our Saviour's Exaltation may be of special Use to support and bear up our Spirits against all distrustful and desponding Thoughts, arising from an unreasonable and excessive Fear of Temptations, or of Death or of Judgment.

OUR own Weakness and Inability to resist Temptations, ought not in Reason to discourage us, when he that is with us to assist us, is greater than he that is against us. Our Lord in that he himself hath experienced and overcome the Power of Temptation, is able and ready at all Times to succour us that are tempted; and will in the end beat down Satan under our Feet.

To dye is to be translated to that blissful Place where our Lord resides; If therefore we have any Desire to see the Majesty, any Ambition to be near the Person of our glorious King; instead of Fearing, we shall be apt to long for Death,

Death, which will introduce us into his
Presence.

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VI.

THE Apprehensions of a future Judgment cannot surely be very terrible to us, when we consider that our best Friend and Benefactor, our Saviour, is to sit up- on the Tribunal. If we believe that Christ will come to be our Judge, we may with Boldness and Chearfulness pray and hope, that he will help us his Ser- vants, whom he hath redeemed with his precious Blood, and make us to be num- bered with his Saints in Glory everlast- ing.

Thirdly. THE same Consideration will be of mighty Force to animate and com- fort us in all Dangers, and under all Troubles and Afflictions that shall befall us in this World. For what Cause can there be of Uneasiness and Anxiety; what good Reason can we pretend for Vexing and Disquieting ourselves, when the Per- son who is our Guardian, and under whose Direction all our Affairs are, hath all Power in Heaven and Earth commit- ted to him? All Events are intirely at his

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his Disposal; all our Enemies are in his Hand; all the Powers of Nature are at his Beck and Command; in Heaven, thousand Thousands minister to him, and ten Thousand times ten Thousand stand before him, waiting for Orders to accomplish his Will. So that, if he pleases, he can extricate us out of all Difficulties and Perplexities, and prosper all our Undertakings. He can over-rule the Designs and Plots of our Adversaries to their own Confusion, and, if Need be, can arm the Elements in our Defence, or command an Host of Angels to pitch their Tents round about us. Since our Lord is entrusted with the Guidance and Management of all Things, every one of his faithful Servants, the least and meanest Subject he has, may depend upon it, that all Things will be ordered for his Good.

Two Things I am firmly perswaded of, and for the Ease and Comfort of my Life I will ever stedfastly believe; That if any thing happen to me by the Permission and with the Consent of the Lord
my

my Saviour, it will some way or other turn to my Advantage; and that nothing can happen to me but by his Permission, and with his Consent. Wherefore upon all Occasions in every Condition of Life, be it better, or be it to outward appearance worse, I will rely upon him, and be thankful to him, and rejoice in him. Am I Poor? I know that he *can* and will give me Riches, when he shall see Riches convenient for me; for the Earth and the Fulness thereof, and all Things else are his. Am I visited with Sicknes? I know that he wants neither Will nor Power to heal me, if **Health** be best. For he is infinitely good and merciful in himself, and he hath been touched with a Feeling of our Infirmities, and therefore his Compassions cannot fail. And surely his Hand is not shortned, nor are Diseases less subject to his Command, *now* that he is Reigning in his Heavenly Kingdom, than when he was in the Form of a Servant upon Earth. Am I surrounded with Dangers, and beset with powerful and

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cruel

SERM.
VI.

PT. I. ciii.
5.

Rev. i.
18.

Hof. xiii.
14.

cruel Enemies on every Side? I will encourage myself against them all by considering, that tho' *the Waves of the Sea are mighty and rage horribly*, yet Christ *the Lord which dwelleth on high is mightier*. Am I led to Death? I assuredly believe, that he can deliver me. However, tho' I dye, I will put my Trust in him, *who was Dead, and is now Alive for evermore, and bath the Keys of Hell and of Death*. Because I confidently expect that a Day will come, when *He shall ransom me from the Power of the Grave, and redeem me from Death*; when He shall be the Plague of Death, and the Destruction of the Grave.

Fourthly. THE Advancement of our Blessed Saviour is a powerful Inducement to the Imitation of him in those Virtues, upon account of which he was advanced; in his Obedience and Resignation to his Father's Will, and in his Humility and Patience under Sufferings. *He humbled himself, saith our Apostle in the Verse before my Text, and became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross.*

Cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him.

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BEFORE us now, as formerly before our Lord, is set everlasting Joy, a never-fading Crown, and a Kingdom that shall have no End; which we may certainly attain to, if, as he did, we will run with Patience the Race that is set before us; if we will endure the Cross, and despise the Shame. The Practice of the same Virtues, the Exercise of the same Discipline which advanc'd the Captain of our Salvation, will raise us his Followers to such a Pitch of Bliss and Glory, as Thought itself in this Life cannot reach. We have our Saviour's own Word for it, *That he that doeth the Will of his Father which is in Heaven, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; That he who humbleth himself shall be exalted: And his Apostle hath assured us, That if we suffer, we shall also reign with him.*

AND tho' it would be unpardonable Presumption to think, that the Glory of which we shall be made Partakers will be equal to that which our Lord Jesus Christ

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is advanc'd to; since neither our Services nor our Sufferings are in themselves of any real Value, much less of equal Value with his; yet it must be confess'd, that there is abundant Encouragement offer'd to Obedience in all even the most difficult Instances, to the lowest Acts of Humility and Condescension, to Patience under the sharpest Tryals and Afflictions; since the Recompence of Reward which awaits us, shall infinitely more than compensate the Hardships of our Obedience; since the highest Exaltation our Nature is capable of, shall be the Consequence of an Abasement every way becoming us in this State of Frailty and Imperfection; and since there is laid up for us an exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory; in comparison of which the Afflictions we now groan under for a Moment are light, and as the small Dust of the Ballance.

Fifthly. SINCE our human Nature is in the Person of Christ set on the right Hand of God, far above all Principality and Power and Might and Dominion, and every Name that is named, not only in
this

this World, but also in that which is to come; How bold an Impiety are *they* guilty of, and with what Severity may *they* expect to be treated, who by Lust or Intemperance debase this Nature below that of the four-footed Beasts, and creeping Things? After so great an Honour done to our Nature, we are doubtless under a very strict Obligation to reverence it, and to live up to the Dignity of it; to use our best Endeavours to preserve it pure and free from the Defilements of Sin; to cleanse it from that Filth and Corruption, which it hath already contracted; to be continually improving and refining it, and advancing it nearer to Perfection; that so *we*, the Members of Jesus Christ the Lord, may be the better qualified to be joyned in Glory with our Head, our Souls to resemble the moral Perfections of his Soul, and our Bodies to be fashioned like his glorious Body.

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VI.

LASTLY, The Exaltation of our Lord is a Pledge of our own future glorious

— Advancement, and a strong Incitement
 SERM. to prepare and qualify our selves for
 VI. it.
 —

OUR Lord having taken Possession of the Heavenly Inheritance for us, as our Representative; our Title to those Blessed Mansions is as sure to us, as if we our selves were in actual Possession of them. Those everlasting Doors which lifted up their Heads that the King of Glory might come in, will certainly stand open to his Retinue, even to all true Believers; who may be well assured not only that they shall be admitted, but also that the Time of their Admission draws nigh; that Christ will speedily accomplish the Number of his Elect, and hasten their perfect Consummation in Bliss both in Body and Soul. For if the first Fruits be already ripen'd and consecrated to God, we may safely conclude that the Season of full Harvest is approaching; if the Head be already glorified, all the Members also shall ere long rejoyce and triumph; if the Fore-

runner

runner be already enter'd, we, for whom he prepared the Way, shall in due Time follow after him.

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WHEREFORE we ought to get ourselves in a Readiness, and to quicken our Preparations for another State; mortifying our Members which are upon the Earth, and seeking the Things that are Above, where Christ sitteth at the right Hand of God; laying aside every Weight, and frequently ascending thither in Heart and Mind, that hereafter we may continually dwell there, and joyn with the Heavenly Host in everlasting Songs of Praise and Thanksgiving to the Lamb that was slain, and is judged Worthy to receive Power and Riches, and Wisdom and Strength, and Honour and Glory and Blessing.

To Him therefore, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, Three Persons and One God, all these be ascribed both now and for evermore.

A Discourse concerning the Perpetuity of Christ's Kingdom.

Being the Substance of TWO
SERMONS on that Subject.

I COR. xv. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28.

*Then cometh the End, when he shall have
deliver'd up the Kingdom to God, even
the Father; when he shall have put
down all Rule, and all Authority and
Power. For he must reign, till he
hath put all Enemies under his Feet.
The last Enemy that shall be destroyed,
is Death. For he hath put all Things
under his Feet. But when he saith all
Things are put under Him, it is mani-
fest that He is excepted which did put*

all

all Things under Him. And when all Things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto Him that put all Things under Him, that God may be all in all.

THE Intention of the Apostle in these Words is to prove the Certainty of a future Resurrection. And this he does by citing a Passage from the cxth Psalm, in which God engages to support the Kingdom of the Messiah, until all his Enemies shall be put under his Feet; of which Enemies *one* is Death. From these Premises naturally follows this Conclusion, That Death, tho' the last Enemy that shall be destroy'd, shall however be destroy'd at last, and its Captives shall be set free, and translated into a State of Incorruption and Immortality.

THIS is evidently the main Design of the Apostle in these Words. But it is evident too, that he had in this Place some other Design in View, and that he

inten-

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intended by the Way to instruct the
Corinthians in some other Point of Doc-
trine besides that of the Resurrection.

What that Doctrine is, seems no easy
matter to determine; nor have Commen-
tators as yet given so satisfactory an Ac-
count of it, but that it may still be justly
esteem'd one of those Things in St. Paul's
Epistles which are hard to be under-
stood.

It shall be my Business in the follow-
ing Discourse: First, To lay before you
several Interpretations of these Words,
which are liable to such Objections as
seem not capable of a clear and just An-
swer. And,

Secondly, To propose *that* which I
think to be the true Meaning of the
Place; and to state, as clearly and dis-
tinctly as I am able, the Doctrine here
taught by the Apostle. From which I
shall in the

Third and last Place, deduce some
useful Inferences and conclude.

First,

First, I AM to produce several Expositions of this Place, which are liable to such Objections as seem not capable of a clear and just Answer. SERM. VII, VIII

SOME there have been who have so far perverted the Meaning of these Words, as to infer from them, that immediately after the Day of Judgment there shall be an End both of the Reign and Person of our Blessed Saviour; and that when all Things shall be subdued unto the Son, the Son himself shall be resolv'd into the Father, and cease to exist distinctly from Him *. Which absurd and impious Tene-ment is so far from having any Foundation in the Text, that it is clearly confuted by it. Since the Apostle expressly tells us, *That when all Things shall be subdued unto the Son, the Son himself shall be subject unto the Father*; which necessarily implies, That the Son shall then continue to exist, and be a distinct Person from the Father, to whom he shall be subject.

FEW, God be thanked, have embrac'd an Opinion of so dangerous a Tendency

* Marcion of Ancyra, and his Followers.

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dency as this. But very many, of more sober and pious Sentiments, have thought this Text a sufficient Warrant to believe that the Kingdom of Christ as Man shall have an End. They willingly acknowledge, That Christ as God shall live and reign together with the Father for evermore; but they maintain, that at the Consummation of all Things, He shall resign to the Father *that* plenary Power with which as Man he was invested after his Resurrection. This is what they understand by his delivering up the Kingdom to God the Father. And this they say the Apostle well proves by his Citation from the Psalmist, *He must reign till he hath put all Enemies under his Feet*: which Words seem to them to imply that He shall reign till then, and no longer. And this they suppose to be very much confirm'd by what the Apostle adds at the xxviiith Verse, *That when all Things shall be subdued unto the Son, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all Things under him*: That is, say they, the Son shall be

be so intirely subject unto the Father, ———
as not to exercise any Authority with or SERM.
under him; that God may be all in all, VII, VIII
i. e. That the Government of the Uni-
verse may no longer be in the Hands of
a Mediator, but that the Deity consisting
of Three Persons, Father, Son and Holy
Ghost, may order and transact all Things
immediately by itself.

THIS is the most common Exposition
of these Words; but there are such con-
siderable Objections against it, that I can
hardly think it to be the true one. For,

First, THERE seems to be very clear
and full Evidence for the everlasting
Duration of that Kingdom, in which our
Lord was instated after his Resurrection.
There are several plain and expresse Tes-
timonies of Scripture to this Purpose.
The Psalmist addressing himself to the
Son of God (*Pf. xlv. 6, 7.*) speaks thus;
Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever; Heb. i.
a Sceptre of Righteousness is the Sceptre 8, 9.
of thy Kingdom: Thou hast loved Righte-
ousness, and hated Iniquity; therefore God
even thy God hath anointed thee with the
Oil

Oil of Gladness above thy Fellows. The
 SERM. Prophet *Isaiab* speaks thus concerning
 VII, VIII the Perpetuity of the Messiah's Kingdom.
 —————
Isaiab Of the Increase of his Government and
 ix. 7. Peace there shall be no End, upon the
 Throne of David and upon his Kingdom,
 to order it, and to establish it with Judg-
 ment and with Justice, henceforth even
 for ever. Agreeable to the Prediction of
Isaiab was the Vision of *Daniel*, Who
 Dan. vii. saw in the Night-Visions, and behold one
 13, 14. like the Son of Man came with the Clouds
 of Heaven, and came to the antient of
 Days, and they brought him near before
 him. And there was given him Domi-
 nion and Glory, and a Kingdom, that all
 People, Nations and Languages should
 serve him; his Dominion is an everlasting
 Dominion which shall not pass away, and
 his Kingdom that which shall not be de-
 stroy'd. The Angel *Gabriel* express'd the
 same Sense in Terms not capable of be-
 ing evaded, (*Luke* 1. 32, 33.) The Lord
 God, saith he, shall give unto him the
 Throne of his Father David. And he
 shall reign over the House of Jacob for
 ever;

ever, and of his Kingdom there shall be no
End. Wherefore in diverse antient Creeds
to the Article concerning Christ's coming
to Judgment at the End of the World,
were added these Words, *Whose King-*
dom shall have no End; with Reference
no doubt to this Text. And that Jesus
Christ is actually entred upon that ever-
lasting Kingdom, which was promised to
him by the Prophets, we learn from
St. Paul, who tells us, That after he had
offered one Sacrifice for Sins, he for ever
sat down at the right Hand of God. And
in his Epistle to the Ephesians he assures
us, That God hath set him at his own
right Hand in the Heavenly Places, far
above all Principality and Power and Might
and Dominion, and every Name that is
named, not only in this World, but also in
that which is to come. Accordingly the
Creeds compos'd by the Councils of An-
tioch and Sirmium, about the middle of
the fourth Century, express this Matter
thus; Who sat down at the right Hand
of the Father, and shall come again at
the End of the World to judge the Quick
and

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Heb. x.

12.

Ephes. i.

20, 21.

Socrat.

Ecc. Hist.

Lib. 2.

c. 19. &

c. 30.

— and the Dead, and to render to every
 SERM. one according to his Works. Whose
 VII, VIII Kingdom being perpetual shall endure to
 — endless Ages, for he shall sit at the right
 Hand of the Father not only in this
 World, but in that which is to come.

So that the Scripture does expressly
 declare, That Christ's Throne shall be
 for ever and ever; That he sitteth at the
 right Hand of God not only in this
 World, but in that which is to come;
 That his Dominion is an everlasting
 Dominion which shall not pass away;
 That he shall reign over the House of
Jacob for ever, and of his Kingdom
 there shall be no End. All which Ex-
 pressions cannot surely denote a Duration
 short of Eternity. For they are as strong
 and significant as any that are made use
 of, to describe the everlasting Duration
 of the Father's Kingdom, and indeed as
 any that the Languages in which the
 Scriptures are written do afford. And
 supposing it to have been the Design of
 the sacred Writers to assure us, that the
 Kingdom of the Messiah should be perpe-
 tual

that and without End, they could not have done it in more proper and expressive Terms than those which they have used on this Occasion. 'Tis true, the Words which we translate *everlasting* and *for ever*, do not always signify an endless Duration; but it must be allowed that oftentimes this is the true Meaning of them; to be sure *then*, when the Holy Ghost himself has been careful to explain them to this Meaning; as he has been in the present Case. For the Scripture having affirm'd, that the Dominion of the Messiah is an everlasting Dominion, immediately adds, that it shall not pass away. Now a Dominion which shall not pass away, must needs be in a strict Sense everlasting, because all Things which are not strictly speaking everlasting, do at length pass away. And whatever Ambiguity there was in the Words of the Angel *Gabriel*, when he said, Christ should reign over the House of *Jacob* for ever; he sufficiently cleared it by adding, That of his Kingdom there should be no End. And where this is

O said,

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 said, it cannot possibly signify any Duration, how long soever, of which there shall be an End.

It is certain that the Kingdom of Christ shall not universally take Place, nor appear in its full Lustre, till the general Judgment. Wherefore St. Paul represents it as Coming at that Time, when he tells *Timothy*, That Christ shall judge the Quick and the Dead at his Appearing and at his Kingdom. And when the Grandsons of *Jude*, the Brother of our Lord, were brought before the Emperor *Domitian*, and were required by him to give an Account of Christ and his Kingdom; of what Nature it was, and when and where it should appear; they answered, That the Kingdom of Christ was not of this World, nor Earthly, but Angelical and Heavenly; and should be at the End of the World, when Christ should come in Glory, and judge the Quick and the Dead *. Shall then the Reign of Christ expire at the *Aera* from which it is sometimes dated? Shall the

univer-
allegissimus cited by Augustin Hist. Eccl. l. 1. c. 12.

universal Extent of his Kingdom be the
immediate Forerunner of the End of it? SERM.
Shall *He* be reduced to the Condition of VII, VIII
a private Subject as soon as every Knee
shall have bowed to his Name, and eve-
ry Tongue shall have confess'd that he
is Lord? Earthly Monarchies indeed are
of a short Continuance, and are often-
times suddenly overthrown. But is our
Lord's Heavenly Kingdom so transient;
so like the Flower of the Field, which
being full-blown presently fadeth away?
The Disciples of Christ expect, accord-
ing to God's Promise, to be rewarded
with an eternal Weight of Glory. Is the
Disciple greater than his Master, or the
Servant than his Lord? Hath *He* who
hath purchased for his Followers an ever-
lasting Crown, obtain'd only a tempo-
rary One for himself? St. *Peter* assures
us, That at the Day of Retribution *they*
who have made their Calling and Elec-
tion sure, shall enter into the everlasting
Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus
Christ; Which how can they be said to
do, if Jesus Christ shall then resign his

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—V—

Royal Authority over them? — This is the first Objection against the common Interpretation of these Words, That it is repugnant to many other plain Texts of Scripture, which do either expressly assert or by consequence imply the Eternity of the Messiah's Kingdom.

2. THESE Words, He must reign till he hath put all Enemies under his Feet, do not necessarily imply that He shall not reign after that his Enemies are put under him. On the contrary, they do rather imply, that He shall reign for ever and ever; as will appear by considering some other Places of Scripture, where the same manner of Expression is used. For Instance, when it is said, That *Michal the Daughter of Saul had no Child until the Day of her Death*; the Meaning plainly is, That from thenceforward she never had any Child; it being sure enough she did not bear Children after she was dead. When God promised *Jacob* to be with him, and not to leave him till he had done *that* which he had spoken to him of, this was all one

2 Sam.
vi. 23.

Gen.
xviii. 17.

one as if he had promised to be always with him; since *Jacob* could have no reason to doubt but that God would be with him, after he had done that Thing of which he had spoken to him. So again, when *St. Paul* prays that the *Philippians* may be sincere and without Offence till the Day of Christ, he cannot mean that they should cease to be so after the Day of Christ; it being certain, that *they* who should be sincere and without Offence till that Time, shall continue so to all Eternity. And not to multiply Instances, when our Lord told his Disciples, That he would not any more eat of the Passover till it should be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God; undoubtedly his Meaning was, that *that* was the last Passover he should ever eat of: It being absurd to suppose, that our Lord intended to eat of the typical Passover again, after that by fulfilling it, he had abolished it. In like manner, when God promises the Messiah that he shall sit at his right Hand, or reign till all his Enemies are put under his Feet; it seems

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very reasonable to understand this Promise of an everlasting Reign; For what should hinder him from Reigning, when all who are against his Reigning shall be subdued? If he reigneth while his Enemies make head against him and oppose him, much more shall he reign when he shall have mastered all Opposition. The most natural Meaning then of these Words is, That the Kingdom of Christ shall be Eternal. And the Apostle's Design in citing them was not to prove, that the Kingdom of Christ should have an end, but that the Kingdom of his Adversaries, Death and the Devil, should have an end; or, to use the Apostle's own Words, That Christ should put down all Rule and all Authority and Power. Indeed there is good Proof, that St. Paul understood these Words to be a Promise of an everlasting endless Reign. For he thus refers to them in his Epistle to the *Hebrews*, *This Man after he had offered one Sacrifice for Sins, for ever sat down at the right Hand of God, from henceforth expecting, till his Enemies be made*

Heb. x.
12, 13.

made his Footstool. But because some judicious Interpreters, joyning the Words for ever with what goes before, read the Sentence thus, This Man after he had offered one Sacrifice for Sins for ever, sat down on the right Hand of God; I will repeat that Passage which I before quoted from the Epistle to the Ephesians, in which St. Paul declares, That God hath raised up Christ from the Dead, and set him at his own right Hand in the Heavenly Places, far above all Principality and Power, and Might and Dominion, and every Name that is named, not only in this World, but in that which is to come. Which Words do plainly teach us, that Christ shall sit at the right Hand of God, as was foretold by the Psalmist not only in this World, while his Enemies are unsubdued, but also in the World to come, after that his Enemies are subdued. Nay, they do farther intimate, that in the World to come there shall be many Powers subordinate to Jesus Christ; so far was the Apostle from asserting, that all subordinate Authority

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Eph. i.

20, 21.

— should end with the present State of
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— 3. CHRIST's being subject to the Father does not imply any Resignation of his Authority, or his being reduc'd to the State of a private Subject. For he may be subject to the Father, and yet not be a private Subject. For even now, while he exerciseth all Power in Heaven and in Earth, he is as truly subject, as he could be if he had no Power at all. For he is *Lord to the Glory of God the Father*; and doth all Things by Virtue of an Authority deriv'd from the Father, and in Obedience to his Will. St. Peter assures us, *That Angels and Authorities and Powers are subject unto Christ*; but it cannot be concluded from hence, that there are no subordinate Rulers among the Angels. The Authorities and Powers may still have the Command of inferior Angels, altho' they themselves together with the Angels under their Command, are subject to the Son of God. As the Rulers among the Angels, so all Earthly Potentates are subject unto Christ; notwith-

Phil.
 II. 11.

2 Pet.
 III. 22.

notwithstanding which they retain their Authority over those, who are subject unto them. Even so the Subjection of Christ to the Father may well consist with his Dominion over all other Beings.

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4. It does not follow from God's being all in all at the End of the World, that Christ shall not then reign in Subordination to him, any more than it follows from St. Paul's Words to the Colossians, *Christ is all in all*, that there were then no subordinate Governours under Christ in the Church. In some Sense, God may now be said to be all in all, as being now the sole Fountain of all rightful Authority, and of all the Blessings which are derived unto the Creatures. But he shall be all in all in a more eminent and higher Sense, when the Devil and his Associates, who are now permitted to exercise an usurped Authority, shall be finally subdued; when, as it was foretold long ago by *Isaiah*, Every Knee shall bow to God, and every Tongue shall confess to him. Which famous Prediction

Col. iii.

11.

Isai. xlv.

23.

tion

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Rom XIV.
10, 11.

tion of the Prophet our Apostle assures us shall then be fully accomplished, when *all shall stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ.* For to submit to Christ is to submit to God, whose Vicegerent Christ is. Then may every Knee be said to bow to God, when all shall bow to him to whom it is God's good Pleasure every Knee should bow. Then shall every Tongue confess to God, when all shall confess *Him* to be Lord, whom the Almighty Father hath constituted Lord of all. And God shall be all in all for this very Reason, Because all shall acknowledge the Dominion of that Person whom he hath invested with all Power in Heaven and in Earth.

15. THERE is no Probability that the Apostle, speaking of God's being all in all, should mean by the Word *God* all the Three Persons in the Sacred Trinity. For the Word *God* does in the New Testament generally signify the Person of the Father; and the Connection of the Apostle's Discourse directs us so to understand it in this Place. For when the

the Apostle

Apostle tells us, That the Son shall deliver the Kingdom to the Father, who hath put all Things under his Feet, and that he shall be subject to him who put all Things under him, that God may be all in all ; it is sufficiently clear, that the God who shall be all in all, is the Person to whom the Son shall deliver the Kingdom, who put all Things under the Son, and to whom the Son shall be subject, that is the Father.

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THIS may be sufficient to shew, that the Sense which is usually put upon this Text is not only contrary to other Texts of Scripture, but is also forced, and such as the Words will not easily bear.

THE very learned Bishop *Pearson* plainly saw, That there was no evading the Force of those Texts which ascribe an endless Duration to the Messiah's Kingdom. Wherefore that he might reconcile this Text to a Doctrine so clearly delivered in other Places of Scripture, He * asserted the Dominion of Christ to be partly Temporary, consisting in an

Autho-

* Bp. *Pearson* on the Creed. P. 152.

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Authority to protect his Subjects and sub-
due his Enemies; and partly Eternal,
consisting in his being Lord of all Things,
and ruling over the People which he
hath purchased with his Blood. And
saith that celebrated Prelate, " Of the
" first Part of this Dominion did *David*
" speak, when by the Spirit of Prophecy
" he called his Son his Lord; *The Lord*
" *said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my*
" *right Hand until I make thine Ene-*
" *mies thy Foot-stool*: Where the Con-
" tinuation of Christ's Dominion over his
" Enemies is promised to be prolonged
" until their final and total Subjection.
" For he must reign till he hath put all
" Things under his Feet. And as we
" are sure of the Continuation of that
" Kingdom till that Time, so are we
" assured of the Resignation at that
" Time. For when he shall have put
" down all Rule, and all Authority and
" Power, then shall he deliver up the
" Kingdom to God, even the Father,
" And when all Things shall be sub-
" dued unto him, then shall the Son
" also

“ also himself be subject unto him that
“ put all Things under him, that God
“ may be all in all. Thus *He* which
“ was appointed to rule in the midst of
“ his Enemies during their Rebellion,
“ shall resign up his Commission after
“ their Subjection.” So far that most
learned Writer. — I will not venture
to reject this Exposition as false, until
I am sure I can substitute a better in the
Place of it; altho’ to me it seems to be
clogg’d with great Difficulties. For it
supposes that by Christ’s delivering the
Kingdom, is meant his resigning the
Kingdom to the Father from whom he
received it; and that his Reigning till
all his Enemies shall be put under his
Feet, means his Reigning till then and
no longer. But now with what Pro-
priety of Speech can Christ be said to
resign the Kingdom, if, as this great
Prelate owns, he shall still retain the
Name and Dignity and Authority of a
King? Does it not look like an Abuse of
Language to say, That he shall reign no
longer than till all his Enemies are put
under

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under him, if he shall continue to reign for ever afterwards? True it is, that after the End of the World, Christ shall cease to subdue his Enemies; but I suppose, not because he shall want Power to do it, but because he shall have no Enemies left to be subdued. The final Subjection of Christ's Enemies does not hinder, but that he may still retain all that Royal Authority which he had while they were unsubdued; altho' the Circumstances of Affairs being altered, he shall have no Occasion of exercising all those Branches of it which he formerly exercis'd. Just as an Earthly Prince hath in Time of Peace all the Authority which he had in Time of War and Rebellion; tho' he no longer exerciseth it in the same manner as in the Time of War, for the Protection of his Subjects, and the subduing of his Enemies. And it seems as improper to say, That Christ shall cease to reign, when he shall cease to rule in the midst of his Enemies, as it would be to say, that an Earthly King ceases to reign, when after having sub-
dued

dued those who rose up against him, he
reigns in Peace over a loyal and a wil-
ling People. A King's Reign may be
more properly said to begin than to end,
when he begins to reign without Oppo-
sition. Accordingly, as I have already
shewn, Christ's Kingdom is represented
as coming at the End of the World, not
because he does not reign now, but be-
cause his Dominion shall then first be
universally acknowledg'd and submitted
to. There is no need of repeating what
has been before said to prove that Christ's
Reigning till all his Enemies are put
under him, does really signify his Reign-
ing always; and that the Subjection of
the Son to the Father, and God's being
all in all, do not import any Resignation
of the Son's Authority. This learned
Bishop's Hypothesis supposes, that these
Expressions do not exclude the Son from
being Lord of all, and ruling for ever
over the People which he hath purchased
with his Blood. And if so, I do not
see how it can be proved, that they do
imply the Surrender of any Authority at
all;

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all; which if they do not, it is manifest the Bishop's Exposition can receive no Strength nor Countenance from them.

INDEED neither in this Passage of *St. Paul*, nor as far as I have observ'd in any Part of the inspired Writings, nor yet in the Writings of any Apostolical Man, are there any Expressions, which being taken in their natural Signification, import the Resignation of the Messiah's Dominion, excepting one only in the beginning of my Text, where we are told, that Christ shall deliver up the Kingdom to God the Father; which I freely own may naturally signify the Surrender of his Royal Authority. But then I hope to shew, that even this Expression will fairly and without offering Violence to it, admit of another Sense consistent with those Texts, which declare that the Kingdom of Christ shall be perpetual. And no one will deny, that when an Expression is fairly capable of divers Senses, *that* Sense which accords with the plain Declarations of Scripture elsewhere, is to be preferr'd to another which clashi-

es with them. And this brings me in
the

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Second Place, To propose *that* which
I think to be the true Meaning of this
Text: which I shall do with all the
Clearness I am able, and with all due
Deference to better Judgments.

THAT we may understand what is
meant by the Son's delivering up the
Kingdom to the Father, let it be observed
that the Word *παράδοσιν*, here render'd
by delivering up, does not always, nor
yet for the most part signify the Resig-
nation of a Thing to the Person from
whom it was receiv'd; but most usually
it has a more general Signification, *viz.*
to deliver a Thing into the Hand of an-
other, to put a Thing into another's
Power or Possession, or else to commit a
Thing to the Care or Protection of an-
other.

LET it also be observ'd, that the
Word *Kingdom* signifies not only Kingly
Authority, but also, and that very fre-
quently, a People or Body Politick under
the Government of a King. This Sense

P

it

——— it plainly bears, when *David* on Occa-
 SERM. sion of the Murder of *Abner* says, I and
 VII, VIII my Kingdom are guiltless; As also
 —V— when our Saviour foretells, That Nation
 shall rise against Nation, and Kingdom
 against Kingdom. And to bring this
 Remark nearer to our Purpose; in the
 xixth Chapter of *Exodus* God promises
 the Children of *Israel* that they should
 be to him a *Kingdom of Priests, and an*
holy Nation. Which Language the A-
 postles *Peter* and *John* have warranted
 us to apply to the Christian Church.
 Christians are now what the *Jews* were
 formerly, the peculiar People, the holy
 Nation, the Kingdom, the Body Politick,
 over which God ruleth by Christ. The
 Kingdoms of the World, by embracing
 the Faith of the Gospel, do become the
 Kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ.
 Accordingly Christ himself manifestly
 styleth the Church his Kingdom, when
 he saith, The Son of Man shall send
 forth his Angels, and they shall gather
 out of his Kingdom all Things that of-
 fend, and them which do Iniquity; and
 shall

shall cast them into a Furnace of Fire. ———
 And in several other Places of the Gos- ^{SERM.}
 pels by the Kingdom of Heaven and of ^{VII, VIII}
 God may very well be understood a State
 or Community of Men, a multitude of
 Persons incorporated into one Body, and
 owning the Dominion of God and of his
 Christ. And in the Writings of St. Paul,
 to be translated into the Kingdom of
 Christ, and to be called to God's Kingdom
 and Glory, is to be admitted Members of
 the Church Militant or of the Church
 Triumphant. In this Sense *Origen* uses
 the Word Kingdom in many Places of
 his Writings, referring to this Text
 which I am now explaining; particular-
 ly at the beginning of his eighth Book
 against *Celsus*; where he tells us, that
Celsus having in his Book written against
 the Christians, demanded of them, Why
 they did not joyn the Worship of
 Demons to that of the Supreme God,
 introduced them answering in the Words
 of our Blessed Lord, *No Man can serve
 two Masters.* *Origen* among other Things
 replies, " That there is no Sedition in

———— SERM. “ this Answer of those, who are not wil-
 VII, VIII “ ling to serve many Lords; who there-
 ———— “ fore are content with the Lord Jesus
 “ Christ, who traineth up under himself
 “ those who serve him; that being train-
 “ ed up he may deliver them, being
 “ become a Kingdom worthy of God,
 “ to God even the Father; who also
 “ seperate and break off themselves from
 “ those who are Aliens from the Com-
 “ monwealth of God, and Strangers from
 “ his Covenants, that they may be Citi-
 “ zens of the Heavenly State, coming
 “ unto the Living God, and to the City
 “ of God, to the Heavenly *Jerusalem*,
 “ and to Myriads of Angels, and to the
 “ General Assembly and Church of the
 “ First-born who are enrolled in Heaven.”

Here we see *Origen* plainly speaks of
 Delivering a Kingdom to the Father; by
 which Kingdom it is evident he means
 those Persons, who withdrawing them-
 selves from the Service of Satan, become
 the Subjects of God, and Members of the
 Heavenly Commonwealth; those who
 will not serve two Masters, but are con-

tent with one Lord Jesus Christ, and are trained up under him; or, to use St. Paul's own Language immediately before my Text, *those that are Christ's*; for, saith he, Every Man shall be made Alive in his own Order, Christ the First-Fruits, afterwards *they* that are Christ's at his Coming. Then cometh the End, when he shall deliver the Kingdom to the God and Father.

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—V—

ACCORDING to the usual Language of Scripture, Heaven is the Habitation of God, and there too is the City to which his Subjects do belong. And this World and its Inhabitants are frequently represented as under the Dominion of the Devil. For he is called the God of this World, The Prince of this World, The Prince of the Power of the Air, * The Prince of the Time of Unrighteousness, The Spirit that Worketh in the Children of Disobedience, And the whole World, saith St. John, is subject unto the evil One. Those who are gained over from the Power of Satan unto God, are not

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* Barn. Epist. 18.

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immediately removed unto the City of God; * but for a Time sojourn here far off from their own City, in the Dominions of the Usurper, who is an Enemy to their King, and a Persecutor of all who own themselves to be his Subjects. And here they are trained up by the Son of God to all Virtue and Purity, that they may be qualified at length to enter into that City, into which nothing that defileth can enter. When they depart this Life they are under the Dominion of Death; their Bodies are detain'd in the Grave, and their Spirits in the invisible Habitation of seperate Souls, until the Time of the Resurrection. When Jesus Christ shall open the Graves, and burst asunder the Gates of *Hades*, and set at Liberty the Prisoners of Hope; and having clothed them with Immortality, shall translate them entire to Heaven the Place of God's Residence, and present them unto his Father holy and undefiled, glorious and incorruptible, a Kingdom worthy of God; and shall lodge

Rev. xxi.
27.

* Herm's Sim. 1.

sodge them in the Mansions prepared for them, where they shall live in the Presence of their King to all Eternity.

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BUT from hence it cannot be argued that Jesus Christ shall then cease to rule over them; they may continue to be subject to him, notwithstanding their Translation to the Place where the most High God dwelleth. As when God brought the Children of *Israel* out of *Egypt* to himself, that is to Mount *Sinai* the Hill in which he dwelt, that they might be to him a Kingdom of Priests, and an holy Nation; they were deliver'd indeed from *Pharaoh* and his Officers, but were subject to the Authority of *Moses* and *Aaron*, and of the Heads of their Tribes and Families.

THERE shall indeed be this great Difference between the future State and this, That whereas in this World God hath been wont to manifest himself by his Son and his Spirit, (for God himself no Man hath seen at any time) In the other World God shall make an immediate Manifestation of himself to his Saints,

——— who shall see him as he is, and behold
 SERM. him Face to Face; and so the chief
 VII, VIII Happiness of that State consisting in the
 ——— Vision of God, shall be derived immediately from God himself. But this does not prove, as some have imagined, that Jesus Christ shall no longer rule in Subordination to his Father. It hath been an antient Opinion, for which there is Ground in the sacred Writings, That the Martyrs are soon after Death admitted into the Presence of God and of Jesus Christ. But none ever from hence infer'd, that they are less subject to the Authority of Christ, than they were before they were admitted thither. Even the Angels who Day and Night encompass the Throne of the Almighty, *those* who stand in the Presence and continually behold the Face of our Heavenly Father, do at the same time bow the Knee to Jesus, and confess him to be their Lord. Wherein lies the Absurdity of supposing, that those who shall be introduc'd into Heaven, there to enjoy the Vision of God, shall continue to be subject to *Him*,
 who

who is invested with all Power in Heaven as well as in Earth; who is as much Lord where God is seen, as where he is not seen; to whom every Creature, not only on Earth and in the Sea and under the Earth, but in Heaven too, ascribeth Blessing and Honour and Glory and Power for ever and ever? Surely it were strange if *they* who are subject to him here, where Satan hath fix'd his Throne, should cease to be subject to him when they are removed from hence into that City, in which shall be the Throne of God and of the Lamb.

It is clear therefore that Christ's delivering the Kingdom to the Father, does not imply the Resignation of his Authority, if by the Kingdom which he shall deliver be meant those Persons, the Dominion over whom he hath purchased with his Blood. Which Interpretation may be farther supported by the Authority of a very antient Writer, *Irenæus*; who at the end of his last Book against Heresies has these remarkable Words; "The Presbyters the Disciples of the Apostles
" say,

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 ——— “ say, that this is the Order and Method
 “ of Man’s Salvation, and that by these
 “ Steps they rise to Perfection. By the
 “ Spirit they ascend unto the Son, and
 “ by the Son unto the Father; the Son
 “ afterwards delivering unto the Father
 “ his own Workmanship, as also it is
 “ said by the Apostle; *For he must reign*
 “ *till he hath put all his Enemies under*
 “ *his Feet.*” And so he goes on citing
 the Words of my Text. Now it is ob-
 servable, that this Father in citing the
 first Part of the Text varies the Apostle’s
 Phrase, and by his Variation of it shews
 how he understood it. For instead of
 saying as the Apostle had said, The Son
 shall deliver the Kingdom to the Father;
 he says, The Son shall deliver to the
 Father his own Workmanship. Whence
 it is evident, that by the Kingdom here
 mentioned *Irenæus* understood those Per-
 sons who are the Kingdom of God and
 of Christ; whom he styles God’s Work-
 manship in opposition to the Hereticks
 against whom he had been Disputing,
 who denied that God the Father of Jesus
 Christ

Christ was the Maker of the World, and of the Creatures in it. According then to the Doctrine of *Irenæus*, which is also the Doctrine of the sacred Writers, Men are brought unto the Son by the Guidance and Influence of the Holy Spirit ; and the Son having prepared them for the beatific Vision, shall deliver them unto the Father ; who shall then by an immediate Manifestation of Himself communicate unto them the Things which Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither have entred into the Heart of Man. Which agrees exactly with what I before said.

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BUT supposing the Word *Kingdom* to signify Royal Authority, the Son's delivering the Kingdom to the Father may perhaps mean, not the laying down that subordinate Authority which he receiv'd from the Father, but the abolishing the usurp'd Authority of Satan, and putting the Empire of the World into the Father's Hands, by bringing all Things into Subjection to Him.

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INDEED in strictness of Speech the Father cannot be said to receive any new Authority; for he is Himself the Fountain of all Authority, and hath by Necessity of Nature all Authority over all. The Kingdom and the Power are always his, and while there are Creatures in the World, he cannot but reign over them. But the Devil and his Angels have long since withdrawn their Allegiance from their Sovereign, and erected a Kingdom of their own in Opposition to *His*; and have made this World which we inhabit, the Seat of their usurp'd Dominion, and drawn in Mankind to revolt from their Maker, and to take Part with them. It is one Branch of the Son's Kingly Office, to wage War with these Rebels and Usurpers, and to bring back the Kingdom to his Father. And when the Enemies of God receive any signal Defeat, and a number of Persons are rescued from their Tyranny, and submit themselves to the Dominion of the Father and of Christ; *then* in the Language of Scripture the Kingdom of God is come; *then* the

the Kingdoms of the World become the Kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ; then the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, and taketh to him his great Power and reigneth. Now if the Kingdom of God is said then to come, when the Dragon and his Angels are overcome; if the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, when *Babylon* the Great is fallen; if the Kingdoms of the World do become the Kingdoms of the Lord, and God taketh to him his great Power and reigneth, when Christ turneth the Nations from the Worship of Devils, to the Worship of the True God his Father; Why may not the Son in like manner be said to deliver the Kingdom to the Father, when he shall wrest all this World out of the Hands of Satan, and his Accomplices shall survive only to endure the Punishment of their Apostacy; when he shall put an End to the Reign of Death, and shall deliver many Millions of his Father's Subjects from their Captivity under it, and conduct them to the City of God, there to serve and worship Him for ever
and

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and ever? Now all this Christ may do without laying down his Royal Authority; for since he is in every Thing subordinate to the Father, He subdueth all Things to the Father by subduing them unto himself, and the Kingdom is certainly in the Hands of the Father, when all are subject to *Him* whom the Father hath appointed to reign under him.

THAT the Son's delivering the Kingdom to the Father, is meant in Opposition to the Continuance of Satan's Reign, and not of the Son's Reign appears from what immediately follows. For thus the Apostle's Discourse runs, Then cometh the End, when he shall deliver the Kingdom to the God and Father, when he shall put down all Rule and all Authority and Power: Which latter Words may perhaps be added by way of Explication of the former; as if the Apostle had said, Then cometh the End, when the Son shall deliver the Kingdom to the God and Father, *i. e.* when he shall put down all Rule and all Authority and Power that opposeth itself to the Father.

THAT

THAT the Son shall prevail over all who oppose him, *David* foretold when he said, The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right Hand, until I make thy Foes thy Footstool. For he must reign, saith the Apostle, till he hath put all Enemies under his Feet.

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AND if all Enemies shall be put under him, then it is certain that Death, which is one of his Enemies, shall be vanquish'd. The last Enemy that shall be destroy'd is Death. For *David* assures us again in the viiith Psalm, that he hath put all Things under his Feet. And as the Apostle argues in another Place, *In that he put all Things under him, he left nothing, that is not put under him.* Nothing, but the Father himself; for lest any should so perversly interpret these general Expressions as from them to infer, that the Father also shall be subject to the Son, our Apostle adds, But when he saith all Things are put under him, it is manifest, common Sense will teach a Man, that *He* is excepted which did put all Things under him.

Heb. ii.
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THE Father by putting all Things under the Feet of the Son, shall not divest himself of the Sovereign Power, nor lose any Authority which he now hath. For when all Things shall be subdued unto the Son, then shall even the Son himself be subject unto him that put all Things under him; just as he was before all Things were put under him. * For the Apostle's Meaning cannot be, that he shall then begin to be subject to the Father; but his Meaning plainly is, That he shall then continue to be subject, that he shall then be no less subject to the Father than he is now. The Son even then when his Kingdom shall be fully established, and he shall be arrived to the highest Pitch of Power and Glory, when all his Enemies shall lick the Dust before him, and he shall receive the Worship of every Knee and of every Tongue, ^{shall} not setting up for himself, as Satan did, in Opposition to the Father; nor claiming a co-ordinate Power with the Father, nor pretending to be in such

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* Cyril Hierosol. Cat. 15.

a Sense equal with him, as not to be subordinate to him; but he shall be in all Things obedient to his Father, and shall upon all Occasions exercise his Authority according to the good Pleasure, and unto the Glory of him from whom he receiv'd it. And To notwithstanding the universal Extent of the Son's Empire, and the actual Subjection of all Things unto him, God the Father shall be all in all. He shall be acknowledged to be the original Fountain of all Authority and Power, and of all the Happiness which shall be enjoy'd by the Creatures. He shall be the One Supreme Monarch of the Universe, from whom all Good shall be derived, and to whom not only all those who are subject unto the Son, but even the Son himself the Lord of all shall yield due Obedience and Adoration. — So that in the Text are delivered these three Points of Doctrine.

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First, THAT at the End of the World all the Enemies of God and of Christ, and particularly Death, shall be totally

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and

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and finally subdued; from whence may be concluded the Certainty of a future Resurrection, which is the main Scope of the Apostle's Discourse throughout this Chapter.

Secondly, **T H A T** after the Resurrection the Church shall be translated to the City of God, there to enjoy the beatific Vision. For this is the most antient Interpretation of Christ's Delivering the Kingdom to the Father. Tho' the other Sense which I gave of those Words, is not destitute of Support from the Authority of Antiquity, and is such as the Words will very naturally bear, and is moreover countenanc'd by the Words immediately following, and by the manner of Expression us'd in other Places of Scripture. However it is not very material which of the two Senses we embrace, because in the upshot they come much to the same.

Thirdly, **T H A T** the Father ever continueth the most High King and Ruler

of

of the Universe, to whom the Son himself
shall be subject, even then when all
Things shall be subdued under his Feet.

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ON these Doctrines I need not now
enlarge, nor add any thing to what I
have already said concerning them, in
order to the Explication of the Text. —

I shall therefore content myself with
mentioning some of those many useful
Inferences which may be drawn from
what hath been said.

SINCE then Christ must reign till all
his Enemies are put under his Feet, let
us in all Dangers rely upon him for Pro-
tection and Succour; for greater is *He*
that is with us than all that are against us.
Let this encourage us to fight manfully
under his Banner, as we engaged to do,
when we renounc'd the Devil and his
Angels, gave up our Names to Jesus
Christ, and owned him for our Captain
and our King. Let us be willingly sub-
ject to Him, whom we must be subject

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to

——— to whether we will or no. Let us take
 SERM. Heed that we be not found among those
 VII, VIII whom he shall destroy, when he shall
 ———
 Pl. xlv. *gird his Sword upon his Thigh, and his*
 3, 4. *right Hand shall teach him terrible*
Things. Let not the prevailing Power
 of Satan and his Confederates tempt us
 to repine, but let us wait with Patience
 IIsai. lxiii. until the Day of Vengeance, till the Year
 1, 4 of the Redeemed shall come; when the
 Lord of Hosts mighty in Battle shall re-
 turn Victorious from the Field of *Edom*,
 with Garments *died in Blood from Boz-*
rah.

LET the Consideration of the final
 Destruction of Death arm us against the
 Fear of it, and moderate our Sorrow for
 those who have undergone the Stroke of
 it, and stir us up to render Thanks to
 God, who shall at length put an End to
 the Triumphs of the Grave, and give to
 us the Victory thro' Jesus Christ our
 Lord.

LET the Prospect of a glorious Re-
 surrection unto Life eternal, administer

to us Ease and Comfort under all Afflictions, and animate us to a patient and cheerful Continuance in Well-doing, whatever Inconveniencies and Sufferings we may thereby expose ourselves to.

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If we hope hereafter to see God as he is, let us while we live here become in some measure like him. Let us preserve spotless and undefiled not only our Spirits, but our Flesh also, in which we shall rise again and see God Face to Face, which in order thereto hath already receiv'd the Washing of Life, and hath been fed with the Bread that nourisheth unto Immortality, and with the Cup of Salvation. Let us earnestly endeavour after the highest Degrees of Purity and Holiness; for in our Father's House there are many Mansions; and *they* shall dwell nearest to him, and have the clearest View of him, and converse most familiarly with him, who shall most resemble him in Holiness and all God-like Virtues. Let us be careful not to drive

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from us that Holy Spirit, which is given to us as a Preparative for, and Earnest of our future Happiness; a Part in Hand of that plenary Communication of Divine Grace by which we shall be raised to Life, and clothed with Incorruption, and enabled to approach the Light which is to Mortals inaccessible, and to live for ever in that Glorious Presence in which is Fulness of Joy.

Lastly, SINCE God the Father alone is the most High King, above whom there is no King nor Lord, nor God nor Father, and to whom all other Persons without Exception are subject; let us ascribe to him this Prerogative, and to him only. Indeed he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father that sent him; wherefore it is our Duty to honour the Son as we honour the Father, but not so as to dishonour the Father. And without dishonouring him we cannot ascribe to another, no not to the only Begotten, that Pre-eminence which belongs

belongs peculiarly to him, as being alone
 Unbegotten. * Let not the Worship of **SERM.**
 the Father and of the Son be divided; **VII, VIII**
 but let the Father be worshipped thro'
 the Son, the Mediator between him and
 us. Let the Son be worshipped next un-
 to and together with the Father, as be-
 ing one with him, and sitting with him
 on his Throne, and ruling over all in
 Subordination to him, and by a Power
 derived from him.

* Cyril Hierosol. Cat. 11.

Q 4 S E R M.

S E R M O N IX.

The Redemption and Resurrection of Mankind.

JOB XIX. 25, 26, 27.

*I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that
he shall stand at the latter Day upon
the Earth.*

*And tho' after my Skin, Worms destroy
this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see
God.*

*Whom I shall see for my self, and mine
Eyes shall behold, and not another;
tho' my Reins be consum'd within me.*

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THAT the Holy Men and Women
who liv'd before the Incarnation
of our Lord, had the same Expectations
which we have of an immortal Life after
Death;

Death; That they believ'd in the same Christ to come, in whom, as already come, we profess to believe; and that they were actually saved by Faith in the same Jesus, by whom we hope to be saved, is a Doctrine very agreeable to the clear and positive Declarations of God's Word, and for that Reason held forth by the Church of *England* in her Articles; in which She asserts, That as well in the *Old* as in the *New Testament*, everlasting Life is offer'd unto Mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and Man, being both God and Man; and that therefore they are not to be heard, who feign that the Old Fathers look'd only for transitory Promises.

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AMONG many other Texts of Scripture which might be produc'd to support and confirm this Truth, *this* which I have pitch'd upon for the Subject of my following Discourse, is so plain and full to the Purpose, that it is sufficient alone to put the Matter out of Question. For in it holy *Jab* does in the strongest and most

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most significant Terms express his unshaken Trust and Confidence in that Messiah, to whom all the Prophets, ever since the World began, bare Witness, together with his steadfast Assurance of being made a Partaker of Redemption from Sin and Misery by the Merits of his Death, and of a Resurrection to endless Bliss by the Power of his Life. *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter Day upon the Earth. And tho' after my Skin, Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for my self, and mine Eyes shall behold, and not another; tho' my Reins be consum'd within me.*

It is well known that some have endeavour'd to put another Interpretation upon the Words; but *that* so unnatural and forc'd, that it deserves not to be mentioned; much less may it stand in Competition with the most obvious and generally receiv'd Sense; against which there lies no considerable Objection, from which therefore we have no Reason

Reason to depart: — The Words then taken in their natural and genuine Meaning contain,

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1. *JOB's* Faith in his Redeemer, in a living Redeemer, that should stand at the latter Day upon the Earth.

2. His Belief of the future Resurrection of his Body, and that notwithstanding the Difficulties which attended it, tho' Worms should destroy his Body, tho' his Reins were consum'd within him.

1. THEN the Words express *Job's* Faith in his Redeemer, in a living Redeemer, that should stand at the latter Day upon the Earth.

Now the Title of Redeemer belongs eminently to Christ, as he deliver'd us from a State of Misery and Captivity, by offering up himself a Sacrifice in our stead, and thereby making a full Satisfaction and Attonement for our Transgressions.

SIN having gain'd a Conquest over our first Parents, all who descended from them were born Subjects to its Dominion.

No

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No meer Man was ever exempted from its Power; nor could those who struggled most against it, ever free themselves entirely from its Yoke. Even those who died before they had committed actual Offences, were nevertheless while they liv'd, in Captivity to its Law, as being tainted with original Depravity communicated to them with their Being. —

As all Men were under the Power of Sin: so Death, which came into the World by Sin, pass'd upon all, and obtain'd an Empire of universal Extent.

So far as Men were the Servants of Sin, they were likewise the Servants of Satan; who first tempted Mankind to sin, to the End that he might rule over them, and become the Prince of this World. He was as cruel a Master to his Vassals, as he had been an undutiful Servant to his Maker; for his Service was the most vile and intolerable Slavery, and his Wages Torment without end.

IN this hopeless Condition we must for ever have continued, had not the Lord, Mighty to Save, undertook our
Deliver-

Deliverance. He by his Sufferings on the Cross procur'd for us that Divine Grace by which we are freed both from the Dominion and Punishment of Sin; the Grace of Repentance, by which we are enabled to wash and cleanse our selves from the Filth of it; and the Grace of Mercy, by which God freely forgives it, so as not to impute to us the Guilt of it. Thus were we redeem'd from all Iniquity by him who was therefore named Jesus, because he was to save his People from their Sins.

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SIN is the Sting of Death; *that* therefore being destroy'd, and as it were crucified on the Cross of Christ, Death, which was once the King of Terrors, is now disarm'd, and become a harmless inoffensive Thing. It is permitted to assault us, but not to hurt us; to detain us under its Dominion for a Time, but not for ever; to land us on the Shoar of Eternity, but not to consign us over to the second Death, which shall have no Power over the Redeemed. Justly therefore is our Saviour said to have abolished Death.

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Death, and to have deliver'd those, over whom it reigned, and who thro' Fear of it were all their Life-time subject to Bondage.

TOGETHER with Death he destroy'd him that had the Power of it, *i. e.* the Devil; who presuming to bruise the Heel of his Adversary, the Seed of the Woman, was quickly made sensible that he was over-match'd, when he himself receiv'd an incurable Wound in his most vital Part. For that Seed of the Woman, being also the Almighty Son of God, trod him under Foot and crushed his Head; bereft him of his Strength, cast him out of his Kingdom, and put a Period to *his* Reign and *our* Thralldom. And having thus spoiled Principalities and Powers, he made a Shew of them openly, triumphing over them on his Cross. — Unspeakable are the Advantages which accrue to us by this Victory, for by it we also are enabled to overcome the evil One. And all who overcome will Christ reward with a Crown of Life, and advance them to sit with him.

himself in his Throne in the Heavenly
Places, from which Satan and his asso-
ciate Angels fell. Thus of Slaves we
are made Kings; and of Captives, Con-
querors. That we being deliver'd from
Bondage into the glorious Liberty of the
Sons of God, might serve him without
Fear, and live all the Days of our Life
to the Praise of Him who hath wrought
for us this great Salvation.

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MOREOVER, by our Violations of
God's Laws, we had render'd our selves
obnoxious to his Vengeance, and incurr'd
the Penalties annex'd to them. Our Of-
fences against God were in the Nature
of Injuries and Debts; for by them we
had detain'd from God the Obedience
due to him, and were therefore to be
deliver'd over to the Tormentors till
Satisfaction should be made. But we
were Insolvent, and could do nothing
towards our own Redemption. In this
Extremity, Jesus Christ became our Sure-
ty, and tho' perfectly innocent and sin-
less, yet was contented for our Sakes to
be by Imputation guilty, to be look'd
upon

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upon and treated as a Debtor, tho' he had fulfilled all Righteousness, that by suffering in his own Person the Punishment due to our Sins, and making full Satisfaction to the Justice of God which we had injur'd, he might cancel the Obligation that was upon us to Suffering or Satisfaction. We being thus freed, he who freed us claims a Dominion over us, and a Propriety both in our Bodies and in our Souls by Right of Redemption.

ACCORDINGLY St. Paul asserts, *That we are not our own, for we are bought with a Price.* And another Apostle hath assured us, that we were not Redeem'd with corruptible Things, as Silver and Gold, but with the precious Blood of Christ; who Himself, whilst he was upon Earth, declar'd that the End of his Coming was to give his Life a Ransom for many. Nor can we doubt but that this Ransom was sufficient to the Purpose for which it was intended, since St. Paul hath in another Place declared, That he was God who purchas'd the Church with his own Blood. So inestimable a Price

Price was given in Exchange for Mens
Souls! SERM.
XI.

OUR Lord did indeed for our Redemption submit himself to Death, yet was he the Prince of Life; and of him it is witnessed by *Job* in the Text several hundred Years before his Appearance in the Flesh, that he Liveth. By which we are to understand not only that he had a Being at that Time, but that he liveth from Eternity to Eternity, without Beginning of Days or End of Years, the same Yesterday, to Day and for ever; and that he is the Author, Preserver and Restorer of Life to the Creatures; for by Him were created all Things visible and invisible; He upholdeth them all by the Word of his Power; He raiseth the Dead, and quickneth whom he will. For as the Father hath Life, and the Power of communicating it, in himself: even so the Son hath Life in himself. Wherefore he is in the *New Testament* called the Life, the Living Bread, and the Living Water.

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Again, As the Inspir'd Writers, when they would set forth God's Strength and Power to defend his People, and to destroy his Enemies, do usually style him the Living God, in opposition to dead Idols, who can neither help themselves nor their Worshippers: so when Life is attributed to Christ, thereby is meant a vigorous and powerful Life. And to say, I know that my Redeemer liveth, is in effect to say, I know that He liveth to protect and preserve me; That he is able to succour me in all Dangers, and to relieve me under all Necessities; That he is Mighty to rescue me from the jaws of Death, and to raise me even from the Grave; wherefore tho' he slay me, I will put my Trust in him.

BUT Christ could never have been our Redeemer, had he not afterwards liv'd a Life of Weakness and Infirmary; had he not took Part of our Flesh and Blood, and been made like unto us his Brethren in all Things, Sin only excepted; that he might be capable of Suffering

ing for our Sins, and that Satisfaction might be made in the same Nature in which the Offence had been committed.

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And some Interpreters are of Opinion, that the Incarnation of Christ was what *Job* intended to intimate when he declar'd that his Redeemer should stand at the latter Day upon the Earth.

OTHERS interpret these Words of his Coming to Judgment at the last Day. And it must be own'd, that this Interpretation of the Words is agreeable to the Context, and very pertinent and suitable to the Occasion on which they were spoke. For *Job* lying under the Pressure of many heavy Afflictions, and being upon that account censur'd as a grievous Sinner by his most intimate Friends, may well be suppos'd to appeal from their uncharitable and unjust Sentence, to the Judgment of the All-knowing and most Righteous Judge of the whole Earth; and to support and comfort himself with this Consideration, that a Time would come, when the Disguise of the Hypocrite should be remov'd, and the Asper-

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fions cast upon the injur'd Innocent should be wip'd off, and both the one and the other should appear to the View of Men and Angels in their true Colours ; * that tho' in the Winter of this Life the green and the dry Trees seem to the Eye alike, yet there is a Spring, a Summer approaching, when they shall be clearly and easily distinguish'd ; when a remarkable and an everlasting Difference shall be put between the Righteous and the Wicked, to whom in this World one Event happeneth.

BUT this Clause may be, and by some is thus translated, He shall rise at the latter Day upon the Earth ; and then it manifestly points at our Lord's Resurrection from the Dead ; without which all his Sufferings had been in vain, and of no Advantage to us. So *St. Paul* tells the *Corinthians*, If Christ be not raised your Faith is vain, ye are yet in your Sins. For tho' the Redemption of Mankind was, together with the Sufferings of the Redeemer, finished on the Cross ;

yet

* *Hermas Lib. 3. Sim. 3. 4.*

yet in order to our reaping the Benefit of it, it was absolutely necessary that he who died should live again, to represent to his Father the Merits of his Sufferings, to intercede for us in Virtue of them, and apply the Efficacy of them to us.

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AND as we had been without Hope if Christ had for ever continued under the Power of Death: so now that he is rais'd, we may safely banish all our Fears and Suspensions, and rejoyce in the Prospect of a glorious Salvation. For if when we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son, much more being reconcil'd we shall be sav'd by his Life. Nor can we doubt but that God hath accepted the Satisfaction made for our Transgressions, that he hath blotted out the Hand-writing that was against us, and cancell'd our Debts, since he hath released Jesus our Surety and Representative; who was delivered for our Offences, and rais'd again for our Justification.

AND not only for our Justification, but that we being quickned after the

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Pattern and by the Power of his Life, might live also. For seeing Christ our Head liveth, we who are his Body cannot remain under the Power of Death; but the Life which he for ever enjoys must of Necessity be communicated to and diffus'd thro' all his Members. Nay so necessary is the Connexion between the Resurrection of Christ and our Resurrection, that in St. Paul's Judgment it is perfectly absurd to deny the latter, while we confess the former. *If Christ, says he, be preached that he rose from the Dead, how say some among you that there is no Resurrection of the Dead? But if there be no Resurrection of the Dead, then is Christ not risen.*

WHEREFORE Job having profess'd his Belief of his Redeemer's Resurrection, might well be so confident as he was of his own; notwithstanding the mighty Difficulties which he saw it clogg'd and encumbered with. For tho' he knew that Worms should destroy his Body, and that his Reins should be consum'd within him, yet was he fully assur'd that this Consumption of his vital

Parts

Parts should be no Impediment to his
Resurrection; but that in his Flesh, *that*
Flesh which should be eaten of Worms,
he should see God, that he should see
him for himself, and that his own Eyes
should behold him, and not another.

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A NOBLE Confession of Faith! which
may put to the Blush those Christians
who deny this great Article of *Job's*
Creed, relying too much on their own
uncertain Reasonings, and over-looking
the plainest Testimonies of Revelation.
For the same Places of Scripture which
inform us that there will be a Resurrec-
tion, do strongly and evidently prove
the Resurrection of that very Flesh with
which we are cloath'd in this Life.

ST. *Paul* represents the Resurrection
of Christ as the Example and Pattern of
our Resurrection. Now whether our
Lord rose in the same Body which was
fastned to the Cross, and which the Sol-
dier pierced with a Spear, no Christian
can question, who knows that unbelieving
Thomas saw in his Hands the Print of the
Nails, and put his Finger into the Print

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of the Nails, and thrust his Hand into his Side. And if we are to be conform'd to this Example, then shall we live hereafter in the same Flesh in which we live here, or in *St. Paul's* own Language, He who rais'd up Christ from the Dead, shall also quicken our mortal Bodies.

IF these Bodies rise not, how then shall those Scriptures be verified which expressly affirm, That *they* who sleep in the Dust of the Earth shall awake; That all who are in the Graves shall hear the Voice of the Son of Man, and shall come forth; That the Sea shall give up the Dead which are in it, and Death and the Grave shall deliver up the Dead which are in them? But what Dead shall the Sea and the Grave deliver up, unless those which were committed to them? And what other Dead were committed to them, than those Bodies which were once alive? The Qualities and Properties of our Bodies shall indeed be wonderfully changed, but the Substance of them shall be the same; for we are not told, that other Bodies shall be prepared for us,

but

but on the contrary, that this corruptible must put on Incorruption; and this mortal, must put on Immortality: And again, that God shall change our vile Body, that it may be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious Body.

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AND indeed the Nature of a Resurrection plainly requires that these very Bodies which dye, should be restor'd to Life. For the Soul never dyeth, but survives even during its Separation from the Body, and is therefore incapable of a Resurrection. The Body only, that Body alone, which fell, can properly be said to rise again. If a new Body were to be made, which before was not, that would be a Creation or a Formation, but not a Resurrection.

THE End of the Resurrection is, that all may appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that every one may receive the Things done in the Body, according to that he hath done. And does it not seem most congruous to Divine Justice, that *that* Body which hath concurr'd with and assisted the Soul in the Performance

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mance of good or bad Actions, should share with it in the Reward or Punishment of those Actions? For what Reason is there, that *that* Body which hath been worn out in the Pursuit and Practice of Virtue should go unrewarded, and another which hath not labour'd therein should receive the Recompence of it? And how much less Reason is there that a Body which never was defil'd with Sin, should be united to a sinful Soul, in order to endure with it inexpressible and everlasting Torments, whilst that which sinn'd is permitted to remain in a State of Insensibility and Indolence?

St. Paul hath taught us, that the Bodies of the Saints are the holy Temples of God, in which he vouchsafes to dwell; And can we think that God will suffer his own Temples to lie for ever in the Dust? Is it not rather credible, that the Almighty Architect will one Day rear them up again?

ON this Account it was, that the Christians in the first Ages of the Church paid great Honours to the Bodies and

Monu-

Monuments of those who dy'd for or in the Lord; as knowing that their dead Carcases both had been, and should hereafter be God's living Temples, and that the Glory of them, when rebuilt, should be greater than that which they had before they fell. It is well known, that in all the antient Churches the Resurrection of the Flesh made one principal Article of their *Creed*. And the Church of *Aquileia* in *Italy* us'd in the Repetition of their *Creed* to declare, that they believ'd the Resurrection of *this* Flesh; being firmly perswaded that not only their Souls, but those very Bodies which they carried about them here, should, by the mighty Operation of God, be made Partakers of that Life and Immortality, which were brought to Light thro' the Gospel. However therefore this Doctrine may be ridicul'd by the Wits of a prophane and blaspheming Age, I will never be ashamed of that Confession of Faith in which the Primitive Christians gloried, and which *Job* was so far from being asham'd of, that he desir'd it might be

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be made publick to the whole World, and transmitted to all succeeding Generations; ushering it in with this earnest and passionate Wish, *O that my Words were now written! O that they were printed in a Book! That they were graven with an Iron Pen and Lead in the Rock for ever! For I know that my Redeemer liveth.*

AND after all, Why should it be thought a Thing incredible that God should raise the Dead? Surely it is no Contradiction for the same Body which liv'd once, to live a second time; and with God nothing, which doth not imply a Contradiction, is impossible. This indeed may seem to us a very difficult Work; yet not so difficult, but that *He* who is endued with infinite Knowledge and Power may easily accomplish it. If our Bodies are convey'd to the remotest Corners of the Earth, or lodged in its most secret and darkeſt Chambers; yet an All-ſeeing Eye will ken them; *He* who is always preſent in all Places, to whom the Darkneſs and the Light are both

both alike, will have no Labour to find them out. If they undergo great and numerous Changes, and lurk under a thousand different Forms; yet *He*, in whose Book all our Members are written, will certainly know them again, howsoever alter'd or disguis'd. If they be confounded and mingled with common Dust, or with one another; *He*, whom no Likeness can deceive, will presently discern them asunder. *He*, who is subject to no Forgetfulness, will exactly remember to what Body each Particle of Dust belonged, and what Situation it had in that Body.

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AND the Power of God is as infinite as his Knowledge. We may in some measure make a Judgment of it by the visible Effects of it, the Production of the World, and all Things that are therein. All these *He* not only fram'd and fashioned, and dispos'd in that wonderful Order in which we behold them; but by the Word of his Power call'd them into Being out of nothing. And cannot *He*, who caus'd *that* to be which

was

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was not, make a Thing which already hath a Being, to be what it hath been before? Cannot He who created, restore? Cannot He who gave Life, revive? Certainly *He*, who can do the greater, can do the less. If He hath already done that, which to our Conceptions appears to be the most difficult, we need not scruple to believe that he is able also to do what is easier.

ALL shall not obtain that happy Resurrection which *Job* expected; but yet all shall rise. For the Resurrection shall be as universal as Death it self. The Just shall not be excluded, nor the Unjust excus'd from it. All sorts and Degrees of Men; High and Low, Rich and Poor, the Learned and Unlearned, the Bond and Free, the Civiliz'd and the Barbarians, who were levell'd by the Grave, shall arise out of it too, without any other Marks of Distinction, than what for their good or evil Works shall be fix'd upon them. All Ages and Generations past, present and to come; those who lie under our Feet, and we who walk

walk over them, and they who shall
walk over *us*, shall all meet Alive in one
general Assembly. They who have been
laid up in the Heart of the Earth, and
they who have been buried in the
Deepes of the Sea, and they who have
been devoured by wild Beasts, and
they who have been burnt with Fire,
whose Smoke hath been driven by the
four Winds; shall all stand upon their
Feet together, an exceeding great Army,
an innumerable Company of all Nations
and Languages, even all the Sons and
Daughters of *Adam* that ever departed
this Life, from the Beginning to the End
of the World.

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THEY indeed who shall be found
Living at our Lord's coming, shall not
rise, because they shall not dye; but
they shall undergo a sudden Change
equivalent to a Resurrection. This Mys-
tery *St. Paul* hath shew'd us, that we
shall not all Sleep, but we shall all be
changed in a Moment, in the Twinkling
of an Eye, at the last Trump.

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MANY useful Inferences might be drawn from what hath been said; I shall at this Time mention only two or three. And,

First, THE Consideration of a future Resurrection is of special Use to support and refresh our Spirits under all Calamities and Afflictions, as it gives us Ground to hope for Deliverance in this Life, or for an ample Compensation in the next. For *He* who can restore a dead Man to Life, can undoubtedly restore a living Man to Health, Riches or Honour. If our Affairs be to appearance never so desperate, they may be retriev'd by Him who can open our Graves, and command our dry Bones to live. But however it may please God to deal with us at present, we may assure our selves, that our Afflictions shall at last have a blessed and joyful Issue. The Day of Retribution shall more than make us amends; and the Heaviness of our Cross, if borne with Patience, shall add Weight to our Crown. This Flesh shall be purged from its Dross in the Furnace of Affliction; and having pass'd

pass'd that Trial, shall appear with the greater Lustre at the Resurrection; as Gold is made brighter by being purified in the Fire.

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Secondly, THE Belief and Expectation of a future Resurrection will fortify us against the Fear of Death. For why should we be afraid of an Event which can do us no Hurt, of an Enemy already vanquish'd? The Resurrection of our Blessed Lord was a Demonstration that he had conquer'd Death, and a sure Pledge of the Victory which we in due Time shall thro' him gain over it. We fall indeed by its Power, but we fall in order to rise higher; and while we yield to its Stroke, we are more than Conquerors. It puts an End to a transitory State of Imperfection and Sorrow, which hardly deserves the Name of Life; but it opens us a Passage to a State of perfect and perpetual Felicity; which when we shall have attain'd to, then shall we truly live. It shutteth our Eyes, and takes us from the Delight of them, our dearest Friends and Companions, but

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those

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those very Eyes which it closeth, shall again be open'd to see God, the Center of all Loveliness and Perfection.

Lastly, THE Certainty of a future Resurrection strongly engages us to Holiness in all our Conversation, both as it proves the Necessity of it, and is a mighty Encouragement to it. For the Resurrection shall be a Privilege to those only who are sanctified. All shall partake of it, but *they* only shall reap Benefit from it, who before they dye a natural Death, rise from the Death of Sin to Newness of Life. Since then it is certain that we shall all rise to an eternal Life, surely it nearly concerns us to take effectual Care, that *that* Life may be a Life of Happiness, and not of Misery. If we have any Love for our selves, any Wisdom and Forecast, or any Spark of Ambition in us, we can need no other Incitement to all Virtue and Godliness than the Hope of Immortality. 'Tis sufficient Encouragement for us not only to persevere, but to make all possible Advances in the Work of the Lord, since
we

we know that our Labour shall not be in Vain, and that the more we abound in that Work, the greater will be our Re-
compence. For tho' we shall not be rewarded for any Merit in our Works, yet we shall be rewarded according to the Nature and Quality of them; and the Degrees of Happiness in the other World shall be proportioned to the Degrees of Holiness which we have attain'd in this. So that while we improve our Stock of Virtue, we are indeed increasing our Treasure in Heaven; and our Attainments in Grace will be rewarded with proportionable Degrees of Glory.

AND as the Resurrection of the Body is a powerful Motive to Holiness and Virtue in general: so to Temperance and Purity in particular. Every pure Body, saith an Apostolical Writer [*Hermas*] shall receive its Reward, that is found without Spot, in which the Holy Spirit has been appointed to dwell. Wherefore keep this thy Body clean and pure, that the Spirit which shall dwell in it may bear Witness unto it, and be judg'd

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to have been with thee. Also take Heed that it be not instill'd into thy Mind that this Body perishes, and thou abuse it to any Lust. — To the same Effect is the Exhortation of another Companion and Fellow-Labourer of the Apostles, in an Epistle to the *Corinthians*. Keep your Bodies pure, and your Seal without Spot, that ye may receive eternal Life. Consider, in what were ye sav'd, in what did ye look up, if not whilst ye were in this Flesh? We must therefore keep our Flesh as the Temple of God. For in like manner as ye were called in the Flesh, ye shall also come to Judgment in the Flesh.

GOD grant that at *that* Judgment we all may be found free from any Blemish and Pollution; meet to converse with those who shall walk with Christ in white Raiment, and for ever to inhabit that City, into which nothing that defileth can enter; for the sake of Him who purified us unto himself a peculiar People, washing us from our Sins in his own Blood. — *To whom, &c.*

A Dis-

made

A Discourse on Christian Mysteries.

Being the Substance of TWO
SERMONS on that Subject.

MAT. XIII. II.

*He answered and said unto
them, Because it is given un-
to you to know the Mysteries
of the Kingdom of Heaven.*

OUR Lord having put forth to the
Multitude the Parable of the Sow-
er, without expounding it to them; the
Disciples, in the Verse before my Text;
ask him, saying, *Why speakest thou unto
them in Parables? i. e. in Parables un-
explain'd.* To this Question our Lord

SERM.
X, XI.

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makes

SERM.
X, XI.

— makes answer in the following Words;
Because it is given unto you to know the
Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but
to them it is not given. For whosoever
hath, to him shall be given, and he shall
have more abundance; but whosoever
hath not, from him shall be taken away,
even that he hath. Therefore speak I to
them in Parables; because they seeing,
see not; and hearing, they hear not, nei-
ther do they understand. As if he had
said, It hath indeed seemed good to God,
that to you the Mysteries of the Kingdom
of Heaven should be clearly and fully
made known; but this is a Privilege
which he hath not granted to this Multi-
tude. For they who are careful to im-
prove those Advantages and Opportuni-
ties of Instruction which God hath lent
to them, shall for their Encouragement
be entrusted with more and greater; but
they who do not make a due Use of the
Means of Grace afforded them by God,
shall not have more or better vouchsafed
to them; but on the contrary shall be
judicially depriv'd of those which they
already

already have. Therefore speak I to the
Jews obscurely in Parables, without
making known to them the Interpretation
of them; because tho' they have seen
the mighty Works which I have done
publickly before them, and have heard
me plainly Preaching to them the Holy
Mysteries of God; yet they are as far
from being convinced and converted, as
if they had not seen my Miracles, nor
heard my Doctrine.

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X, XI.

HAVING thus briefly considered the
Occasion of the Words, and their Con-
nection with the Context; I propose, in
discourfing upon them, to do these three
Things.

First, To enquire what Christian Mys-
teries are, and to remove some Mistakes
concerning them.

Secondly, To shew what a mighty
Privilege it is to be admitted to the
Knowledge of the Christian Mysteries.

Thirdly, To direct you to the most
proper and ready Means, by which the
Knowledge of the Christian Mysteries
may be attain'd.

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X, XI.

First, I SHALL enquire what Christian Mysteries are, and endeavour to remove some Mistakes concerning them.

OUR Evangelist St. *Matthew* having in this xiiith Chapter of his Gospel related how our Lord declared to the Multitude several Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven in Parables, takes Occasion V. 35. to remark, that hereby was fulfilled *that* which was spoken by the Prophet, saying, *I will open my Mouth in Parables; I will utter Things which have been kept Secret from the Foundation of the World.* And St. *Paul* in the xvith Chapter of his Epistle to the *Romans* V. 25. makes mention of the *Mystery which was kept secret since the World began, but now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the Prophets according to the Commandment of the Everlasting God, made known to all Nations for the Obedience of Faith.* And in other Places he speaks of the Mystery, which in other Ages was not made known unto the Sons of Men, as it is now revealed unto his holy Apostles and Prophets by the

Eph. iii.
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the Spirit; which from the beginning of
the World hath been hid in God; which
hath been hid from Ages and Generations,
but *now* is made manifest to his Saints.
From these Texts it is plain, that a
Gospel Mystery is a Theological Truth,
not known to Men for many Ages, but
at length reveal'd by Jesus Christ and his
Apostles, inspir'd for that Purpose with
the Holy Spirit of God.

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X, XI.

V. 9.

Col. i.
26.

To Natural Religion Christianity hath
added many Doctrines not discoverable
by the Light of Nature. Such are all
those which inform us of the Persons and
Offices of Jesus Christ and the Holy
Ghost, and of the Will of God concerning
the Redemption of Mankind, and of the
Method taken by Him to accomplish it.
Of these the World could have had no
Knowledge, had they not been disco-
ver'd by the Christian Revelation. Where-
fore they are properly Christian Myste-
ries. We speak (saith St. Paul, 1 Cor. ii.
7, &c.) *the Wisdom of God in a Mystery,*
even the hidden Wisdom which God or-
dain'd before the World unto our Glory.

Which

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 X, XI.

Which none of the Princes of this World knew; — But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither have entred into the Heart of Man the Things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit : for the Spirit searcheth all Things, yea the deep Things of God. For what Man knoweth the Things of a Man, save the Spirit of Man which is in him? Even so the Things of God knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of God?

IN a less proper Sense some Doctrines even of Natural Religion may be called Christian Mysteries; because a clear and certain Discovery of them was first made by the Gospel to Men of all Conditions and Capacities. For Instance, the Doctrine of a future State after Death is a principal Article of Natural Religion, and seems capable of being demonstrated by Reason. Yet it cannot be denied, that the best and wisest Philosophers before our Saviour's Time (who were very willing to believe it, and took great Pains

to satisfy themselves and others of the Truth of it) did sometimes express themselves very doubtfully concerning it; and were never able to arrive at such a full Assurance, such clear and lively Apprehensions of it, as innumerable Multitudes of Persons high and low, learned and unlearned, have receiv'd from the Christian Religion. So that the Apostle might with Reason enough affirm, That Jesus Christ brought Life and Immortality to Light thro' the Gospel. SERM.
X, XI.

THUS much may suffice to shew what a Mystery is. ——— I shall in the next Place set my self to remove some Mistakes concerning Mysteries; which I shall do by shewing what a Mystery is not.

AND First, a Mystery is not an Absurdity. Reason was implanted in Men by the God of Nature to enable them to find out Truth, and to distinguish between *It* and Falshood. And tho' we allow that Reason compar'd to Revelation is but as a Candle in comparison of the Sun; yet it is *the Candle of the Lord*; and so far as it directs us, it directs

SERM.
X, XI.

Rom.
i. 19.

rects us Right. St. Paul pronounces the Idolatry of the Heathen World inexcusable, because *that* which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. And how God hath shewed it unto them he tells us in the Words immediately following; *For the invisible Things of him from the Creation of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the Things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead.* So that (according to the Apostle) not only those Things which are made known unto Men by Revelation, but likewise those which are discovered by Natural Light, are shewn unto them by God. Wherefore it is as impossible that God should reveal any Thing inconsistent with Reason, as it is that he should make two Revelations inconsistent with one another. For if God should reveal any Thing contrary to Reason, he would then reveal some Thing contrary to what He himself hath shewed unto us, *i. e.* He would contradict himself. The Voice of Reason is the Voice of God; and therefore

fore to oppose the Dictates of Revelation to the Dictates of Reason, is to set the Dictates of God himself at Variance with one another. And it is a very idle Question which some may be ready to put to us, What if God should reveal something repugnant to Human Reason? Are we not bound to believe him? They may as well say, What if God should contradict himself? What if God, who cannot lye, should shew unto us a Lye? Are we not bound to believe him? The Supposition that God should do any such Thing, is highly impious, as well as absurd.

Do I then make the short-sighted and fallible Reason of Men the adequate Measure of Truth? I answer, All Truth cannot be discovered by Reason; but all Truth is agreeable to it. Many Things may be true which lie hid from it; but nothing can be true which contradicts it. I grant that the Truths which we know are but few in comparison of those which we are ignorant of. But then we are sure, that whatever clashes with any one
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SERM.
X, XI.

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X, XI.

of those Truths which we know, is false; because all Truth is perfectly uniform and consistent. I grant too, that Men are fallible, and are oftentimes actually deceiv'd in their Reasonings. But then that some Principles and Conclusions of Reason are certain (as certain as any thing can be) must be acknowledged by all those who are not resolved to reduce all Things to Uncertainty, and to overthrow all Religion both Natural and Revealed. From Principles of Reason we conclude that there is a God; and that he is True in all his Declarations. And whoever denies the Certainty of these Conclusions, does in effect deny the Certainty even of Reveal'd Religion, the Belief of which is founded upon them. Before a Man can give full Credit to a Divine Revelation, he must be assur'd that God is, and that he is True and cannot lye, nor set his Seal to a Lye. For he who is not perswaded that there is a God, cannot possibly believe that God hath made any Revelation; and he who does not believe that God is True, cannot

cannot think himself oblig'd to believe
any Revelation, tho' confessedly made
by God, and confirm'd by Miracles. But
when a Man is perswaded of both these
Truths, his Reason will necessarily de-
termine him to yield his Assent to every
Thing revealed by God. So that Men
assent to Divine Revelation, because it is
agreeable to Reason so to do; and there-
fore it is plain, that no Divine Reve-
lation can contain any Thing disagree-
able to Reason, since it cannot be agree-
able to Reason to assent to any Thing
disagreeable to Reason.

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X, XI.

IF the Christian Religion did indeed
teach those absurd Doctrines, which some
affirm that it doth teach; it would fol-
low by unavoidable Consequence, that
Christianity was an Imposture, and not a
Divine Revelation. For from the Ab-
surdity of a Doctrine we draw a conclu-
sive Argument against the Divinity of
any Religion which asserts that Doctrine.
When Christians dispute against Paga-
nism, they make it their Business to shew
the Absurdity and Unreasonableness of
it;

SERM.
 X, XI. it; and having done this, they rightly
 judge that they have sufficiently confu-
 ted it. Now *they* who reject a Pagan
 Religion as false, because the Principles
 of it are not reconcileable with Reason,
 cannot (consistently with themselves)
 believe that the Christian Religion may
 teach Things not reconcileable to Reason,
 and be true notwithstanding. Wherefore
 those among Christians, who are charged
 with holding and maintaining Absurdi-
 ties, ought not (as the manner of many
 is) to take Sanctuary in Mysteries; but
 they ought to vindicate their Tenets from
 the Charge of Absurdity. Which if they
 are not able to do, they must confess,
 either that their Tenets are no Parts of
 the Christian Religion, or else that the
 Christian Religion is not of Divine Ori-
 ginal.

WOULD the Time permit me, I
 could easily shew that all the Doctrines
 of Christianity are perfectly consonant to
 sound Reason; if I might but be allow-
 ed to maintain them, as they have been
 delivered by God's infallible Spirit in the
 Sacred

Sacred Writings; and not as they have
been represented in Systems of Divinity
compos'd by fallible Men. There is no-
thing in the Christian Religion but what
the most intelligent and judicious Per-
sons may rationally assent to. Christians
indeed have advanced many Opinions
full of Absurdity and Contradiction; but
this is really no good Objection against
Christianity; for Absurdities are to be
charged upon those who teach them,
and not upon Christianity which does not
teach them.

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X, XI.

Secondly, A MYSTERY is not an un-
intelligible Doctrine.

To prevent all Mistakes, it will be
necessary (before I proceed farther) to
declare, that it is not my Intention to
affirm that we may understand the par-
ticular Manner *how* the Things revealed
in the Scriptures do exist or are effected;
but only that we may understand the
Meaning of the Doctrines delivered to us
in the Sacred Writings. I beg Leave to
illustrate this by two or three Instances.
The Scriptures do assure us, that Jesus
T Christ,

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SERM.
X, XI.
—
Christ, the only Son of God, did take upon him human Flesh, and was conceived in the Womb of the Virgin *Mary*. The particular Manner how this was accomplished, is above the Comprehension of the most profound Scholars; but what the Meaning of the Doctrine is, is obvious to every Capacity. Another Doctrine revealed in the Scriptures is, That Jesus Christ knoweth the Secrets of Mens Hearts. How Christ knows the Hearts of Men, no Man can tell; but what is meant by his knowing the Hearts of Men, I presume every one who hears me clearly apprehends. Again, The Scriptures inform us, that the Holy Ghost disposes and enables Men to do their Duty. To explain the Manner *how* the Holy Ghost does this, is a Task too hard for any one to undertake; but to understand what is meant by this, is no difficult Matter. And all the Doctrines of Christianity (at least all those which are of the greatest Importance, and most necessary to be believed) are so far from being unintelligible, that they are easy

to be understood by any Person of an honest and teachable Disposition, tho' of but a moderate Capacity.

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THE Christian Religion was design'd for the Benefit of all. It equally concerns the Ignorant and the Learned, the Unwise and the Wise, the Poor and the Rich. Wherefore the wise and good God was pleased to accommodate it to the Understandings of the one as well as of the other. The Pride and Prejudices of the Great and Learned would not suffer them to embrace a plain and familiar Gospel, propagated by simple Fishermen, not concerning it self with Philosophical Speculations, nor having in it any Mixture of Science falsely so called, but rather opposing and condemning it. Whence it came to pass that the first Professors of Christianity were generally mean and illiterate Persons. For those Things which God in his just Judgment *bid from the Wise and Prudent, he thought good to reveal unto Babes. The Poor had the Gospel preached to them. And God chose the Poor of this World, rich in Faith,*

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— and Heirs of the Kingdom. *Where is the Wise? (saith St. Paul) Where is the Scribe? Where is the Disputer of this World? Hath not God made foolish the Wisdom of this World? And a little after, Ye see your Calling, Brethren, how that not many wise Men after the Flesh, not many Mighty, not many Noble are called. But God hath chosen the foolish Things of the World to confound the Wise;— and the weak Things of the World, to confound the Things which are mighty.*

MYSTERIES indeed cannot be understood unless they are revealed; but surely this does not hinder, but that being revealed they may be understood. Our Lord in the Chapter out of which my Text is taken, hath declared several Mysteries, no one of which is unintelligible. The Doctrines of God manifested in the Flesh; Of Christ crucified; Of the Union between Christ and his Church; Of the Change which all (as well those who shall be found Alive, as those who shall be raised to Life) shall undergo at the general Resurrection; Of the Rejection

tion of the *Jews*; and of the Calling of the Gentiles; All these Doctrines are by *St. Paul* termed Mysteries; and they are all of them such as Men may clearly and distinctly apprehend.

THE Scripture frequently speaks of knowing, and of making known, of revealing and of manifesting Mysteries. Which Expressions undeniably imply, that Mysteries are Truths capable of being understood, and that they are delivered in intelligible Terms. For to say that Men know, or that God hath made known to Men, Things which they are not capable of understanding (that is, Things which they cannot possibly know) is a flat Contradiction. Nor can Men be said to know any Doctrine, till they know the Meaning of the Terms in which it is expressed. And such Truths as are delivered in Terms which no Man can understand, are not made known, nor revealed nor manifested to Men, but rather concealed from them. There is therefore this plain Difference between a Gospel Mystery and an unintelligible

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Truth ; Mysteries were once Secrets to Men, but ceased to be so when they were revealed by Christ and his Apostles ; but unintelligible Truths ever were Secrets to Men, and ever will be so.

THE Christian Mysteries were revealed that they might be the Objects of our Faith. Now nothing which a Man cannot understand can possibly be the Object of his Faith ; because Faith is an Act of the Understanding. Faith is an Assent of the Mind ; and the Mind assents to nothing but what is propos'd to the Understanding ; and Things unintelligible are no more propos'd to the Understanding, than Things invisible are objected to the Sight. Before Men can believe the Christian Mysteries, it is necessary that they should be made known to them by a Divine Revelation. Now (as I before observ'd) Things which are above the Reach of Human Understanding cannot possibly be made known unto Men ; and even those Things which are not above the Reach of Human Understanding cannot be said to be made known or revealed

revealed unto Men, unless they are declared in Terms that have a certain and known Signification. From whence it evidently follows, that the Mysteries which Christians are requir'd to believe in order to Salvation, are intelligible Truths express'd in intelligible Terms.

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WHEN God expresses himself in Terms which Men cannot understand, all that they are able to do in this Case is to believe that those Words of God, the Meaning of which they know not, have a Meaning in which they are true. And so (in this Case) the Mind assents not to any Thing unintelligible, but to a very plain as well as a very certain Proposition.

SOME Prophetical Parts of Scripture are (it must be confess'd) so obscure, that it seems hardly possible to discover the true Meaning of them, till Time shall give Light to them. And there are obvious Reasons why this should be so. Nor can it be pretended that the Knowledge of future Events is necessary to all Christians. But it seems very necessary

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that

— that all Christians in all Ages should
 SERM. rightly understand the Doctrines of Chris-
 X, XI. tianity, especially its principal and fun-
 ———— damental Articles. And therefore God
 hath been pleased to declare these with
 all possible Plainness and Clearness.

I FORESEE what will be objected
 against all I have said upon this Head.
 The Mystery of the Holy and Blessed
 Trinity is (in the Opinion of many) so
 far from being easy to be understood,
 that it is incomprehensible. For a satis-
 factory Answer to this Objection, I must
 refer Men to the Scriptures, in which
 this Mystery is revealed. If what the
 Scriptures have delivered concerning the
 Doctrine of the Trinity is unintelligible,
 then I must grant that this Doctrine is
 unintelligible; and that the Objection
 raised from it is unanswerable. But if
 those Places of Scripture which concern
 the Doctrine of the Trinity are not
 difficult to be understood, then (I think)
 it must on the other hand be granted
 me, that the Doctrine of the Trinity
 may be understood, and that the Ob-
 jection

jection drawn from it is without Foundation.

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THERE are in the *New Testament* several hundred Texts, which one way or other relate to this great and venerable Mystery; and in my Judgment the generality of them are very plain; some few of them only being somewhat obscure and ambiguous. Moreover, the plain Texts are of great Use to clear and determine the Meaning even of these; and do (I'm perswaded) direct us most times to the true, and always to a safe Interpretation of them. The Limits of a Discourse of this Nature will not permit me to bring together so great a multitude of Passages. Let it suffice at present to observe, that the Substance of the Doctrine taught in them is briefly this.

I. THAT there is one God the Father Almighty, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, who alone is to be worshipped as such.

2. THAT there is one Lord Jesus Christ, the beloved and only begotten Son of God, and his express Image; who was
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with God in the Beginning, and by whom God created all Things; who being sent into the World by his Father, came down from Heaven, and was by the Power of the Holy Ghost conceived and born of the Virgin *Mary*; who glorified his Father here on Earth, revealing unto Men the Divine Will; and confirming his Doctrine by many mighty Works, which he did by the Power of God, and humbling Himself and becoming obedient to the Death of the Cross, that He might redeem Mankind, and reconcile them unto God; who ascended into Heaven, and is set down with his Father in his Throne; being on the Account of his Humility and Obedience exalted far above all Principality and Power, and Might and Dominion; and having a Name given unto him, which is above every Name; that at his Name every Knee should bow, of Things in Heaven, and Things in Earth, and Things under the Earth; and that every Tongue should confess that he is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father; thro' whom, as being
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the Mediator between God and Men, ———
Men are to offer up their Prayers and ^{SERM.}
Praises unto God, and God bestoweth ^{X, XI.} ———
upon Men all good Gifts and Blessings.

3. THAT there is one Holy Spirit of God, who spake by the Prophets; who influenced and conducted our Lord during the State of his Humiliation; who was sent by the Father and by the Son to guide the Apostles into all Truth, to endow them with miraculous Gifts and Graces, and to direct them in the Work of their Ministry; who sanctifieth and comforteth the Members of Christ's Church, and, in a Word, worketh all spiritual Gifts, both ordinary and extraordinary.

I APPEAL to all who have been conversant in the Scriptures, whether *this* be not *that* Doctrine of the Trinity which is every where taught in the *New Testament*. And is there any Thing absurd, or difficult to be understood in all this?

MEN indeed in treating of the Doctrines of Christianity have affected to use many hard Words and puzzling Distinctions,

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tions, no where found in Scripture, nor ever heard of in the Christian Church till several Ages after Christ; and which (we may reasonably presume) were never thoroughly understood by those who have made use of them. But no unintelligible Discourses or Forms of human Composition are Gospel Mysteries; nor hath any Man or Company of Men, Authority to oblige Christians to receive them as such. Christians are not bound to assent to any Proposition concerning Matters of Revelation upon any other than one of these two Accounts; either because the Proposition is formally and in so many Words express'd in Scripture; or else because the Meaning of it is agreeable to Scripture. But now how shall Men be sure that the Meaning of any Proposition express'd in unscriptural Terms is agreeable to Scripture, unless they first know what the Meaning of it is? Wherefore all unscriptural Expressions, the Signification of which is not distinctly understood, ought for ever to be banished out of Divinity.

THE

THE Holy Scriptures are the perfect
and the only Rule of a Christian's Faith; and the Truths which are therein made
known unto us by God, are the Christian
Mysteries; the Belief of which, as they
are delivered by the Inspired Penmen
with all Plainness and Simplicity, is sufficient to denominate a Man an Orthodox
Christian.

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PEOPLE may, if they are so minded, call Jargon by the Name of Mystery; as not only the Romanists, but several other sorts of Hereticks and Enthusiasts both antient and modern have done, as well in our own Country as Abroad; but I am sure that it is no Mystery of Godliness, no Mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven; and that a Man may withhold his Assent from it without being an Heretick.

I HAD Reason to say thus much against wrong Notions of Mysteries, since they may be of bad Consequence to Christians, and to the Christian Cause. To Christians, because they tend to discourage Men from enquiring into the Doctrines

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of Christianity, and endeavouring to get a clear and distinct Knowledge of them; And to the Christian Cause, because they are apt to bring a Reproach upon it, and furnish its Adversaries with some shrewd Objections against it; for which there would be no Room, if Christians would speak of Mysteries as the Scriptures speak of them. If a Man had a Design to disparage Christianity, he could not do it more effectually, than by representing it as a Religion, the fundamental Principles of which cannot be cleared from the Charge of Inconsistency; or cannot be understood; no not by those who make it their Business to study the Writings in which they are taught. The

SECOND Thing I propos'd to do was to shew, what a mighty Privilege it is to be admitted to the Knowledge of the Christian Mysteries.

THE Value of any sort of Knowledge is to be estimated chiefly by the Usefulness of it. Now the Knowledge of the Truths reveal'd to us by Christ and his Apostles, is of the greatest Use and Importance

portance to us: The Gospel gives us
clear and certain Information of a future
State after Death; in which Men shall
be for ever happy or miserable, accord-
ing as they shall have demean'd them-
selves in this present Life. And it plain-
ly teaches us what we are to believe and
do, in order to obtain eternal Happiness,
and escape eternal Misery. And that
the Consideration of the Weakness and
Frailty of our Nature, and of our mani-
fold Miscarriages, may not discourage us
from exerting our best Endeavours to do
what is required of us, it assures us that
God will grant us the Grace of his Holy
Spirit, to strengthen and assist us in the
Performance of our Duty, and to restrain
and keep us that we sin not; and if any
Man do sin, it farther assures us that we
have an Advocate with the Father Jesus
Christ the Righteous, who is a Pro-
pitiator for the Sins of all those who
truly repent, and come unto God by
him. That these Truths are of the
greatest Moment to us is evident, be-
cause they nearly concern our everlasting
Interest;

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Interest; in comparifon of which, all temporal Concernments and Interests are inconfiderable. Had the Light of Nature only guided our Enquiries, we have no Reason to flatter ourfelves that we fhould have made fuch a full and certain Difcovery of any of thefe Truths, as is made to us by the Gospel; and of fome of them we could have made no Difcovery at all. That God fhould fend his Son into the World, to shed his Blood for the Remiffion of our Sins; and that He fhould fend his Holy Spirit into our Hearts, to enable us to keep his Laws; Thefe are Things which would never have entred into our Thoughts; much lefs could we have certainly concluded that God would do all this for us.

WE cannot therefore be fufficiently thankful for that Revelation which hath brought to Light the whole Divine Will, and hath informed us of the gracious Intention of God, and of the wife and wonderful Method taken by Him to redeem us from Sin and Death, to reftore in a great meafure *here* our deprav'd and diftem-

distemper'd Natures, and to perfect them
hereafter in a State of endless Bliss and
 Glory. God hath not dealt so with all,
 as he hath dealt with us. Many, much
 better than we, were never made ac-
 quainted with these glad Tydings, or
 had only some obscure and imperfect
 Notices of them. So that I may not un-
 fitly bespeak you in the Words of our
 Saviour to his Disciples a little after my
 Text; *Blessed are your Eyes, for they*
see; and your Ears, for they hear. For
verily I say unto you, that many Prophets
and righteous Men have desired to see
those Things which ye see, and have not
seen them; and to hear those Things which
ye hear, and have not heard them.

I SHALL now proceed in the

THIRD and last Place, to direct you
 to the most proper and ready Means by
 which the Knowledge of the Christian
 Mysteries may be attained.

WITHOUT Dispute the Things of
 God may be learnt best from God him-
 self; the Mysteries of the Christian Re-
 ligion from Jesus Christ himself, and

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— from his Apostles commissioned by Him
to publish them to the World, and assisted
in the Execution of their Commission
by *that Spirit of Truth which searcheth
all Things, even the deep Things of God.*
Now we all know that the Holy Scriptures
(being written by Divine Inspiration)
are the Word of God, and that our Lord's
own Sermons and Discourses are recorded
by the Evangelists; and that the Doctrine
of the Apostles, and of some of their
Companions, is at large set forth in their
own Writings, and in the History of
their Acts written by St. *Luke*. Nor do
we know of any other Books, besides
these which I have mentioned, in which
the Mysteries of Christianity are infallibly
taught and explain'd. Wherefore the
ready and only sure Way to get a true
and exact Knowledge of these Mysteries
is to search and study the Scriptures,
especially those of the *New Testament*;
because many Things, which in the *Old
Testament* are but obscurely foretold, or
shadowed out in Types and Figures, are
in the *New* plainly and at large related,
and

and set in the clearest and strongest Light. ———

IN order to a thorough understanding of the Scriptures, it is certainly of great Use to be well skill'd in the Languages wherein they were originally written; to be acquainted with the History and Customs of Antiquity; to know the Opinions of pious and learned Christian Writers both antient and modern, and to weigh the Arguments by which their Opinions are supported. But very few among Christians have Ability and Leisure to make use of all these Helps; and therefore I shall not in this Place say any more concerning them. Great Numbers among us, God be thanked, can themselves read, and the rest have Opportunities of hearing others read the Holy Scriptures, translated into their own Language; by doing which sincerely, frequently and attentively, they may (with the Divine Assistance, which is to be had for asking) attain to a competent Measure of Christian Knowledge, and learn from God's own Mouth what he requires them to believe and do.

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HE is a sincere Reader of the Holy Scriptures, who (when he reads them) lays aside all Prejudice and Partiality, and firmly resolves to embrace whatsoever is therein revealed, tho' it should happen to clash with his Interest, or with his Lusts, or with his own or other Mens Opinions. And this sincere Disposition is very requisite to qualify Men for the right understanding of the Christian Doctrines. For it is well known that Mens inordinate Affections and Appetites are very apt to mislead them, and do in some Cases render them incapable of making a true Judgment of Things. They who have addicted themselves to the Pursuits of Honours, Riches and Pleasures, are concern'd not rightly to understand a Religion which calls them off from the Love of these Things; and therefore it is no Wonder if they do not rightly understand it.

PRECONCEIV'D Opinions likewise have a mighty Power to blind the Eyes of Men, and to hinder them from perceiving the plainest and most evident Truths.

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We have a remarkable Instance of this in the Apostles themselves. Tho' our Lord had told them several Times, in as plain Words as he could possibly use, *That he should be betrayed into the Hands of Men, and be mocked, and spitefully intreated and spitted on; and that they should scourge him and put him to Death, and that the third Day he should rise again;* yet St. Mark once and St. Luke twice observes, *that they understood none of these Things; and this Saying was hid from them, that they perceived it not, neither knew they the Things which were spoken.* Now this Blindness of the Disciples may thus (and, I think, no otherwise) be accounted for. It was a received Opinion among the Jews in our Saviour's Time, that the Messiah should be a mighty Temporal Prince, who should deliver *Israel* from the Yoke of their Enemies, and extend his Conquests over foreign Nations, and reign prosperously and gloriously for ever and ever. And it appears from several Places of the *New Testament* that this Opinion had taken

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deep Root in our Lord's own Disciples; which was the Reason that they did not apprehend his Meaning when he spoke very plainly to them of his Sufferings and Death. The literal and true Sense of our Saviour's Expressions was obvious; but it being apparently inconsistent with that Notion which the Disciples (as well as the rest of the *Jews*) entertain'd of the Messiah, they overlooked it; and imagined that their Master's Words had some figurative or mystical Meaning, which they were not able to find out.

THIS Instance may teach us that the Way to understand the Scriptures is, not to make our Belief (tho' it should happen to agree with the receiv'd Doctrine) the Rule of interpreting Scripture, but on the contrary, to make the natural and genuine Interpretation of Scripture the Rule of our Belief. Which if we do, tho' our Sentiments should happen to differ from the Judgments of learned Men, and even of Councils and of Churches, we need not be much disturbed at it; because learned Men and Councils and Churches

Churches may err, and oftentimes have erred in Matters of Faith; and therefore their Determinations have neither Strength nor Authority, unless they can be proved by Warrants of Holy Scripture. But the Scripture was written by the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost, who is infallible; and therefore whatever *that* says is by all means to be embraced, whether it be agreeable to the Opinions of Men or no. For the Opinions of Men are not a Rule by which we are to try the Doctrines of Scripture; but Scripture is the Rule by which we are to try the Opinions of Men.

As there is no Necessity that we should interpret the Writings of the inspired Penmen consistently with the Doctrines of Men uninspired: so it is very necessary that we should *so* expound every Part of God's Word, as that it may agree with every other Part of it. Which that we may do, we must diligently compare one Place with another, and consider together what is dispersedly said in Scripture concerning any Doctrine.

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SERM. By this Means many seeming Inconsisten-
X, XI. cies may easily be reconciled; many Diffi-
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culties, which have mightily puzzled
Christians, may receive a clear and natu-
ral Solution; many Controversies, which
have disturbed the Peace of the Church,
may soon be ended. An Example or
two will shew the Usefulness of this
Practice which I am now recommending.

THE Scripture does frequently attri-
bute the Creation of the World to God
and in some Places to Him alone; which
may seem repugnant to those Places of
the *New Testament*, which ascribe the
Creation to Jesus Christ. To get rid of
this Difficulty, some have asserted that
Jesus Christ had no Hand in the Creation
of the World; others, that Jesus Christ
and God the Father are One and the same
Person. Neither of these Assertions is
true; for the *New Testament* doth as cer-
tainly ascribe the Creation of the World
to Jesus Christ, as to God the Father;
and in almost innumerable Places speaks
of Christ as a distinct Person from the
Father. But this Difficulty may be easily
cleared,

cleared, by taking in all that the Scrip-
 ture says of this Matter, and by duly
 attending to those Texts which declare
 that God created all Things by Jesus
 Christ, and that there is one God the
 Father, of whom are all Things, and
 one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all
 Things. From these Passages it seems to
 me very evident, that the Creation of the
 World is attributed to God, as the first
 Cause and principal Author of all Things;
 and to Jesus Christ, as the subordinate
 Agent by whom God the Father wrought.
 If I might be allowed to use the Lan-
 guage of Antiquity upon this Occasion,
 I might say that God the Father is the
 Maker and Creator of the Universe, and
 that Jesus Christ in the Creation of all
 Things ministred to the Will, and ful-
 filled the Command of the Father. It is
 a very usual Thing to appropriate to the
 principal Author those Actions and Ope-
 rations which in some Sense may truly be
 ascribed to a subordinate Agent. Thus
 it is certain from Scripture that *Moses* and
 the Prophets, and Christ and his Apostles
 did

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did many wonderful Works; and yet the Psalmist tells us, that God only doth wondrous Things; which is very truly and properly said, because it was God who did Wonders by *Moses* and the Prophets, and by Christ and his Apostles. In like manner it is certain from Scripture, that all Things were made by Jesus Christ; and yet God may with Truth and Propriety be styled the only Maker of the World, because it was God alone who made the World by Jesus Christ.

Again, THE Scripture teacheth us that there is one God, the Father; and that there is none other God but one; and yet it teacheth us that Jesus Christ is God. To reconcile this appearing Contradiction, some have affirm'd, that Jesus Christ is the very same Person with God the Father; which (as I before observ'd) cannot be true; it being as plain and as certain from Scripture, that God the Father and Jesus Christ his only begotten Son are two distinct Persons, as that *Abraham* and his only Son *Ishaac* were two distinct Persons. But the Appearance

ance of Contradiction vanishes, if we take
 into Consideration all that the Scripture
 says concerning the Divine Authority of
 Jesus Christ. For as the Scripture in-
 forms us that Christ is truly God: so it
 likewise informs us, that all Things are
 delivered to him of his Father, *Mat. xi. 27.*
 That all Power is given unto him in
 Heaven and in Earth, *Mat. xxviii. 18.*
 That his Father hath appointed unto him
 a Kingdom, *Luke xxii. 29.* That he is
 set down with the Father in his Throne,
Rev. iii. 21. That the Father hath given
 all Things into his Hand, *Jo. iii. 35.*
 That the Father hath committed all Judg-
 ment unto him, *Jo. v. 22.* That the
 Father hath given him Power over all
 Flesh, that he should give eternal Life
 to as many as God had given him, *Jo.*
xvii. 2. That God hath highly exalted
 him, and given him a Name which is
 above every Name; that at the Name
 of Jesus every Knee should bow, of
 Things in Heaven and Things in Earth,
 and Things under the Earth; and that
 every Tongue should confess that Jesus
 Christ

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Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father, *Phil. ii. 9, 10, 11.* That God hath set him at his own right Hand in the Heavenly Places, far above all Principality and Power, and Might and Dominion, and every Name that is named, not only in this World, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all Things under his Feet, and gave him to be the Head over all Things to the Church, *Eph. i. 20, 21, 22.* And to the same Effect the Scripture speaks in other Places. Now when it is said, that God hath put all Things under Christ, it is manifest (saith *St. Paul*) that He is excepted which did put all Things under him. So that tho' Christ be indeed over all, God blessed for ever; yet he cannot be said to be the God of the Father, who gave to him those Powers by Vertue of which he is over all, God blessed for ever. But the Father may be truly said to be the God of Jesus Christ, and he is often so called in Scripture; particularly in the first Chapter of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, where the Author is treating of Christ's

Christ's Divinity and styles him God, saying, *Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a Scepter of Righteousness is the Scepter of thy Kingdom:* And then it immediately follows, *Thou hast loved Righteousness and hated Iniquity, therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the Oyl of Gladness above thy Fellows.* Wherefore Christ's being God (by having received Divinity from his Father) does not hinder the Father from being that One Self-existent Supreme Independent God, *that God of Gods*, to whom all other Beings in the World (Jesus Christ himself not excepted) are subject; who is not commanded, nor sent, nor authorized by another, but is himself the Origin and Fountain of all Power; who is not oblig'd to act according to another's Will, or to another's Glory, but may justly require that all others should fulfil his Will, and act to his Glory. You see then how we may acknowledge Christ to be God, without contradicting that fundamental Principle of

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— of our Religion, that there is but one
 SERM. God, the Father.
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IF any one shall object, that the Advancement of Jesus Christ to the Administration of the Government of the World is not a sufficient Ground to style him God, I will refer him to our Lord Jesus Christ himself, whose Reply to this Objection is unanswerable. Our Lord discoursing to the *Jews*, Jo. x. 30, &c. called God his Father; which was in Effect to call himself the Son of God. Upon this the *Jews* charged him with Blasphemy, for that he (being a Man) made himself God. In Answer to this Charge of Blasphemy our Lord reasons thus; *Is it not written in your Law, I said ye are Gods? If he called them Gods unto whom the Word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken; say he of him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the World, Thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God?* Our Lord's Argument is plainly this; In the Scripture (which cannot be contradicted)

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Magistrates acting by Commission from God, are styled Gods and Children of the Most High, *Pſ. lxxxii. 6.* If then God himself, speaking by the Mouth of the Psalmist to Temporal Rulers, calleth them Gods and Children of the Most High; surely these Titles (God and Son of God) may without Blasphemy be assumed by Him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the World, with the Character of Prince Messiah, and with a much higher Authority than any Earthly Prince ever had.

WITHOUT Doubt the Holy Ghost is his own best Expofitor. And therefore the surest Way to get a true Understanding of his Meaning is to compare what He hath said in one Place with what He hath said in another; and to interpret those Texts in which there is any Thing of Obscurity or Ambiguity, by those which are plain and clear. And that we may be able to do this, it is our Duty to be diligent and attentive in reading the Scriptures, making the Word of God our Study, and the frequent

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quent Subject of our Meditations. He who reads any Book whatsoever superficially and carelessly, may easily happen to take some Passages of it in a Sense not intended by the Author, and directly contrary to other Passages, and even to the whole Tenor and Design of the Book.

MOREOVER, He who would understand any particular Text of Scriptures, must attend to the Scope of the Discourse, and to the Connection which the Words have with the Context. Dependent Clauses and Sentences (when they are considered singly, and looked upon as compleat and independent Propositions) are very liable to be misunderstood, or to be wrested to a Meaning quite different from that which they naturally bear, when considered together with what goes before and follows after.

IN the vth Chapter of St. *John*, v. 23, we read *That all Men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.* How often have these Words been produced to prove (what indeed being taken apart they may possibly signify) that the very
same

same Honour which is due to the Father, ^{SERM.}
 is due likewise to the Son? Whereas ^{X, XI.}
 from the Context it appears, that there —
 is a different and distinct Honour due to
 each of them; That the Father is to be
 honoured as the Person who hath com-
 mitted all Judgment to the Son; and the
 Son as the Person to whom all Judgment
 is committed by the Father; That the
 Father is to be honoured as the Person
 sending, and the Son as the Person sent
 by the Father; And that the Honour
 which is paid to the Son, the Party sent,
 doth ultimately redound to the Honour
 of the Father, the Party sending. For
 thus the Context runs, *The Father judg-*
eth no Man, but hath committed all Judg-
ment to the Son; that all Men should honour
the Son, even as they honour the Father.
He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth
not the Father which hath sent him.
 When our Lord says, The Father hath
 committed all Judgment unto the Son,
 that all Men should honour the Son even
 as they honour the Father; He cannot
 possibly mean, that all Men should ho-

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nour the Son, as being that God whose Authority is independent and underived; but He must mean, that all Men should honour the Son as well as the Father; That all Men should honour not only the Father to whom all Judgment originally belongs, but likewise the Son, as the Person unto whom the Father hath committed all Judgment. The Particle *καὶ* (which is here render'd even as) is frequently used in Scripture, and especially in St. John's Writings, to denote not a perfect and exact Equality, but only some degree of Likeness. Our Lord praying to his Father for his Followers (*John xvii.*) has these Expressions; *They are not of the World, even as I am not of the World, v. 16. That they may be one, even as we are one, v. 22. Thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me, v. 23.* And in like manner, in the 1st Epistle of St. John, Ch. iii. v. 3. it is said, *Every Man that hath this Hope in him, purifieth himself even as He is pure.* — From which Places it cannot be collected, that Believers may be as perfectly

fectly free from a worldly Disposition as
Christ was; or as perfectly one, as Jesus
Christ and God the Father are; or that
God loveth them as dearly as he loves
his only Son; or that they can attain to
that Perfection of Purity, of which Christ
was a Pattern.

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Again, THESE Words of our Saviour,
I and my Father are one, (Jo. x. 30.)
have by many been understood to signi-
fy, that Jesus Christ and his Father are
one Person. But the Context plainly
distinguishes our Lord from the Father,
and naturally leads to another Interpre-
tation. For thus our Lord discourses in
the Verses immediately foregoing; *My
Sheep bear my Voice, and I know them,
and they follow me. And I give unto
them eternal Life, and they shall never
perish, neither shall any pluck them out
of my Hand. My Father which gave
them me is greater than all; and none is
able to pluck them out of my Father's
Hand. I and my Father are one.* That
is, one by Consent and Agreement of
Will, or one in Power, (the Father ha-

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————ving communicated all Power to the Son) not one Person. For our Lord had just before said; that his Father gave him the Sheep; and *He* who giveth, is certainly a distinct Person from *Him* to whom he giveth. Two or more distinct Individuals are in Scripture frequently said to be one, by an Unity of Love and Concord, or by a figurative and mystical Unity. Thus *Gal. iii. 28.* Ye are all one in Christ Jesus. *Rom. xii. 5.* We being many, are one Body in Christ. *1 Cor. iii. 6, 8.* I have planted, *Apollos* watered. ———— Now he that planteth, and he that watereth are one; *Acts iv. 32.* The Multitude of them that believed, were of one Heart and of one Soul. *1. Cor. vi. 17.* He that is joyned unto the Lord, is one Spirit. And our Lord himself declares, (*Mat. xix. 6.*) That a Man and his Wife are no more Twain, but one Flesh. And *Jo. xvii. 22.* He thus prays to his Father for Believers, That they may be one, even as we are one. It were easy to multiply Instances of this kind. This way of Speaking was common

mon among the *Jews*, and well understood by all. And the *Jews* charged our Blessed Saviour with Blasphemy, not (as some have imagined) for saying that He and the Father were one; but for calling God his Father; as is evident from our Lord's Answer before recited, in which he tells them, Not that He was the same Individual with God the Father, but that the Father had sanctified Him, and sent Him into the World; upon which account He might without Blasphemy call Himself the Son of God.

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HAVING now done with the three Particulars which I at first propos'd to speak to, I shall only add this one necessary Caution, That as it is our Duty to enquire diligently into those Things which God hath revealed to us: so we must be careful not to carry our Enquiries beyond the Bounds of Divine Revelation. Every Word of God is pure; we may not add to his Words, lest He reprove us, and we be found Liars. It is a high Degree of Folly to be Wise

——— above what is written. For Scripture
 SERM. being the only Light we have in Matters
 X, XI. of Revelation, when we go beyond *that*,
 ——— we wander in the Dark, and must un-
 avoidably fall into many Errors. And
 as it is very foolish, so is it, very pre-
 sumptuous in us to pry into those Things
 which God hath thought fit to conceal
 Deut. from us. Secret Things belong to God;
 xxix. 29. but Things revealed, belong unto us and
 to our Children for ever. The Truths
 which God hath revealed to us in the
 Holy Scriptures are the proper Subjects
 of our Enquiries, because it is in our
 Power to know them; and the Know-
 ledge of them nearly concerns us, and
 surpasseth all Understanding. For it is
 a Tree of Life to them that lay hold
 upon it, and happy is every one that
 retaineth it.
 Prov. iii. 18.

Now to Him that is of Power to
 stablish us according to the Gospel, and
 the Preaching of Jesus Christ, (according
 to the Revelation of the Mystery which
 was kept secret since the World began,
 But

But now is made manifest, and by the
Scriptures of the Prophets according to
the Commandment of the Everlasting
God, made known to all Nations for the
Obedience of Faith) *To God only wise
be Glory thro' Jesus Christ for ever.
Amen.*

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Christ born in the Ful-
ness of Time.

GAL. IV. 4, 5.

*When the Fulness of Time was
come, God sent forth his Son,
made of a Woman, made un-
der the Law; to redeem them
that were under the Law,
that we might receive the
Adoption of Sons.*

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THE Design of the Apostle's Dis-
course in this Place is to convince
the *Galatians*, that there was no Oblig-
ation upon Christians to observe the
Law of *Moses*. To which End he
reasons

reasons thus. Under the Mosaic Dispensation the Church was in her Minority; but under the Gospel she is at full Age.

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Wherefore when the Gospel came, the Levitical Law, which was calculated only for the Nonage of the Church, had no longer any Power over her. For as an Heir, while he is a Child, is under the Direction of Tutors and Governours, till the Time appointed by his Father's Will; but when *that* Time is come, ^{he} enters upon the Estate, and is no longer subject to his former Governours: even so the People of God, while they were Children, were in Bondage under the Elements of the World; *i. e.* were subject to the Ordinances of the Levitical Law; but when God's appointed Time was expir'd, the Children of God were freed from their former Servitude by the coming of Christ, entred upon the Possession of those Blessings which he purchased for them, and enjoy'd the Privileges of adult Sons. (*When the Fulness of Time was come, God sent forth his Son; made of a Woman, made under the Law;*

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to redeem them that were under the Law,
that we might receive the Adoption of
Sons.

IN which Words there are these three Things considerable.

1. THE Time of the Messiah's coming; when the Fulness of Time was come.

2. A CHARACTER and Description of the Messiah; He was the Son of God, made of a Woman, made under the Law.

3. THE End and Design of His coming; to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons.

First, THE Time of the Messiah's coming; when the Fulness of Time was come; *i. e.* when the Time appointed by God, and prefix'd by the Prophets, was expired. *and sent forth his son*

There are THREE remarkable Predictions there are, in the *Old Testament*, pointing out the Time of the Messiah's coming. The first, of the Patriarch *Jacob*; the second, of the Prophet *Daniel*; the third, of the Prophet *Haggai*.

The

THE Prediction of *Jacob* is recorded
by *Moses* in the XLIXth Chapter of *Gene-*
sis, in these Words. *The Sceptre shall*
not depart from Judah, nor a Lawgiver
from between his Feet, until Shiloh come.
That by *Shiloh* is signified the Messiah,
is acknowledg'd by the most antient
Jewish Writers; who all agree, that the
Meaning of these Words of *Jacob* is this.
The Descendants of *Judah* shall not be
dispossess'd of the Sovereign Power, nor
cease to be governed by their own Laws,
till the Messiah shall appear. Now about
twelve Years after the Birth of our Sa-
viour, it must be confess'd that the
Sceptre began to depart from *Judah*.
For at that Time *Judæa* was made a
Province of the Roman Empire; and the
Power of Life and Death was taken from
the *Jews*, and lodged in the Hands of
the Roman Procurator. And within less
than forty Years after our Lord's Cruci-
fixion, the whole Jewish Polity was, to-
gether with their City, quite overthrown;
and there hath been no Sceptre in *Judah*,
nor any Lawgiver between his Feet ever
since;

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— since; but from that Time to this, the
 — *Jews* have been dispers'd over the Face
 — of the whole Earth, and subjected to the
 — Laws of the several Countries in which
 they sojourn.

IN the latter Part of the 1xth Chapter of the Book of the Prophet *Daniel*, the Angel *Gabriel* foretells the exact Time of our Blessed Saviour's Death, when Transgression was to be finished, and an End was to be made of Sins, and Reconciliation for Iniquity, and everlasting Righteousness was to be brought in, and the Vision and Prophecy to be seal'd up, and the most Holy to be anointed, and Messiah was to be cut off, tho' not for himself. All which was to happen within seventy Weeks of Years from the Time of the going forth of the Commandment to restore and to build *Jerusalem*. Now if from the Time of the going forth of this Commandment in the Reign of *Artaxerxes*, we count downwards four hundred and ninety Years, they will expire in the nineteenth Year of *Tiberius* the Roman Emperor; in
 which

which Year, in the Month *Nisan*, Jesus
Christ suffered Death upon the Cross; and by his Death took away the Guilt of Sin, appeased the Wrath of God, and procured Justification for all believing Penitents; or, in the Language of the Angel, He finished Transgression, and made an End of Sins, and made Reconciliation for Iniquity, and brought in everlasting Righteousness. At the same Time all the Types and Prophecies which concern'd the Life, Suffering and Death of the Messiah, were punctually fulfilled; and so the Vision and Prophecy were sealed up. Moreover, Jesus Christ during his publick Ministry acted as a Prophet; at his Death he was consecrated a Priest for ever after the Order of *Melchisedec*; and after his Resurrection He enter'd upon his Kingly Office, and was invested with all Power in Heaven and in Earth; to all which high Functions He was anointed with the Holy Ghost, which the Father gave to Him without Measure; and so the most Holy was anointed.)

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WE may farther observe, that the seventy Weeks are by the Angel divided into three distinct Periods, *i. e.* into seven Weeks, sixty two Weeks, and one Week.

THE Seven Weeks, containing forty nine Years, are allotted for restoring *Jerusalem*, and building again the Street and the Wall; *i. e.* for the Settling and Reforming the Jewish Government in Church and State; which Work having met with much Opposition, was finished by *Nehemiah*, forty nine Years after it had been begun by *Ezra*.

To these seven Weeks succeeds another Period of sixty two Weeks, or four hundred and thirty four Years; which will bring us down to the Time when *John the Baptist* preached in the Wilderness, and prepared the Way of the Messiah. Our Lord himself hath warranted us to date the beginning of the Gospel from this Time; for, saith He, the Law and the Prophets were until *John*, and since that Time the Kingdom of God is preached. And so from the going forth
of

of the Commandment to restore and build again *Jerusalem*, unto the Messiah the Prince, were seven Weeks and threescore and two Weeks.

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THESE were followed by a third Period of one Week, or seven Years. The Ministry of *John the Baptist* continued three Years and a half of these seven; and during the remaining three Years and a half, Jesus Christ in Person preached the Kingdom of Heaven, and invited Men to embrace the Terms of the New Covenant; which Covenant he in the End of the seventh Year ratified with his Blood, which he shed for the Sins of Men. By his Death the Ceremonial Law was abolished, and the Sacrifices and Oblations commanded by it ceased to be of any farther Use; they having been instituted only as Types of that one available Sacrifice, which Christ offered to his Father upon the Altar of the Cross; himself being both the High-Priest, and the Lamb of God bearing the Sins of the World. And thus after seven Weeks and threescore and two Weeks, *i. e.* in the

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the last of the seventy Weeks, Messiah was cut off, but not for himself. And He confirm'd the Covenant with many for one Week ; and in the half, the latter half of the Week, He caused the Sacrifice and Oblation to cease.

Not many Years after the Death of Christ, the Guilt of his innocent and sacred Blood drew on the *Jews* that terrible Vengeance, which God executed upon them by the Hands of the *Romans*, who fully verified those Words of the Prophecy, *The People of the Prince that shall come shall destroy the City and the Sanctuary; and the End thereof shall be with a Flood, and unto the End of the War Desolations are determined, and with the abominable Armies he shall make it desolate, even until the Consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the Desolate.*

THE Prophet *Haggai* plainly declares, that the Messiah should make his Appearance in the second Temple ; the very Foundations of which were, as the *Jews* themselves testify, torn up with a
 Plots

Plow-share, so that not one Stone was left upon another, above sixteen hundred Years ago. This Prediction of Haggai is in the second Chapter of his Prophecy at Verse 6, and it runs thus; *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts; yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the Heavens, and the Earth, and the Sea, and the dry Land; and I will shake all Nations, and the Desire (or Expectation) of all Nations shall come, and I will fill this House with Glory, saith the Lord of Hosts. The Silver is mine, and the Gold is mine, saith the Lord of Hosts. The Glory of this latter House shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts; and in this House will I give Peace, saith the Lord of Hosts.*

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By shaking the Heavens and the Earth and all Nations are signified those great Commotions and Revolutions in the Kingdoms of the World, which happen'd between the Time of this Prophecy and the Nativity of our Saviour. For in that Interval of Time the Persian Empire was suddenly overthrown by the
Y Grecians;

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Grecians; and after long Wars the *Grecians* themselves, and all the Nations which they had conquered, were subjected to the *Romans*: And *Augustus* was in peaceable Possession of the Empire of the World when Jesus our Messiah was born; who might well be styled the Expectation of the Nations, since (as Pagan Histories have assur'd us) about this Time there went a Rumour thro' all the Eastern Countries, that out of *Judæa* should arise those who should rule over the whole World. Our Lord during his Abode on Earth frequently honour'd the Temple with his Presence; and in it *He*, who by the Prophet *Isaiab* is called the Prince of Peace, and by St. *Paul* our Peace, preached the Gospel of Peace. And tho' probably the second Temple never equall'd the first in point of Beauty and Magnificence; tho' the second Temple wanted several Tokens of the Divine Favour which the first enjoy'd; such as the Ark of the Covenant, and the Mercy Seat, from whence God gave Answers by an audible Voice, the *Sheci-*
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nab or Manifestation of the Divine Presence in a bright Cloud over the Mercy Seat, the Oracle of *Urim* and *Thummim*, and the Holy Fire which descended from Heaven; which were greater Ornaments to a Temple than all the Silver and Gold in the World; yet these Things were not so great a Glory to the former House, as the Bodily Presence of the Messiah was to the latter; ^{that} as will evidently appear if we consider,

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Secondly, THE Character and Description which is given of the Messiah in the Text, *viz.* That he was the Son of God, made of a Woman, made under the Law.

IN the first Place then, he was the Son of God, to whose Honour the Temple was dedicated; a Son not unworthy of such a Father; being himself both Lord and God, Lord of Lords, and over all, God blessed for evermore; the Brightness of his Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person. By whose ineffable Ministry the Almighty Architect built the Worlds; who, according to the unanimous Opinion of Antiquity, sup-

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ported by many Testimonies of Scripture, frequently appear'd in the Form of God to the Patriarchs and Prophets, as the Angel of God's Presence, his Word, his Oracle, the Interpreter and Revealer of his Will; who conversed with *Adam* in *Paradise*; who shut up *Noah* in the Ark which he had instructed him to build, and brought the Deluge upon the World of the Ungodly; who having receiv'd Power from his Father to judge the Sodomites, rained down Fire upon them from the Lord out of Heaven; who was seen by *Jacob* standing at the Top of the mystic Ladder, which reached from Heaven to the Earth; who spake to *Moses* out of the burning Bush; whose Voice shook the Earth at the Delivery of the fiery Law, when he came down upon Mount *Sinai*, attended with twenty thousand Chariots of God, even thousands of Angels; who went before the Camp of the *Israelites*, in a cloudy Pillar by Day, and in a Pillar of Fire by Night; who sustained six hundred thousand Men, besides Women and Children,

with

with Water out of the Rock, and with Bread dropp'd from the Clouds forty Years; before whom *Joshua* fell on his Face to the Earth, paying to Him *that* Worship which was due to the Captain of the Host of the Lord; whom *Isaiah* saw sitting on a Throne high and lifted up, and his Train filled the Temple; whom *Daniel* in the Night-Visions beheld coming with the Clouds of Heaven, and receiving from the Antient of Days Dominion and Glory, and an everlasting Kingdom over all People, Nations and Languages; to whom upon his Resurrection the Father actually committed all Power in Heaven and in Earth, and advanc'd Him to his own right Hand in *the Heavenly Places*, to sit down with him in his Throne, far above all Principality and Power and Might and Dominion, and every Name that is named, not only in this World but in that which is to come; That unto Him our Saviour, our King and our God, according to the good Pleasure of the Almighty Father, who hath put all Things under his Feet,

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every Knee should bow, of Things in Heaven and Things in Earth, and Things under the Earth, and that every Tongue should confess that he is Lord to the Glory of God the Father.

THIS Sublime Person, this Lord of Glory, at the Time appointed by his Father emptied himself of the Form of God, and, as the Text informs us, was made of a Woman. (By which Expression St. Paul plainly asserts the Truth and Reality of our Saviour's Humanity, in opposition to a Sect of Hereticks as early as the Apostle's Days, who maintain'd that Jesus Christ was a meer Phantasm, and not a real Man; and that He only seem'd to be born, to eat and drink, to suffer and dye. The same Expression is a sufficient Confutation of another wild Opinion advanc'd by some, That our Lord did not derive his Body from the Virgin his Mother, but brought it with him from Heaven. If either of these Assertions had been true, the Apostle could not in any Propriety of Speech have said that Christ was made of a Woman.)

It

It was absolutely necessary, that the Redeemer of Mankind should partake of the Nature of those whom He came to redeem. And it was as necessary, that He who was to be a propitiatory Sacrifice for the Sins of others, should himself be without Spot or Blemish. That therefore the Son of God might assume our Nature without the Defilement of it, and become like unto us in all Things, Sin only excepted; He was (according to the Prophecies that went before of him) born of a Virgin, who was enabled to conceive by the miraculous Operation of the Holy Ghost. (The Son of God being in this extraordinary Manner made of a Woman, wiped off in a great Measure that Reproach which the Mother of Mankind had brought upon her Sex. For if the Woman was seduc'd by the Tongue of the Serpent, *He* who bruised the Serpent's Head, was in a strict and peculiar Sense the Seed of the Woman. If she was first in the Transgression, by which Death was brought into the World; she was alone in giving Birth to *Him*

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— who hath purchased for us Life and
 SERM. Immortality.)
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— THE Blessed Virgin being a Daughter of *Abraham*, our Lord was by Birth made under the Jewish Law. And accordingly he was circumcised the eighth Day; and because he was his Mother's first-born Son, he was (as the Law directed in that Case) dedicated to the Lord in the Temple at *Jerusalem*. And tho' the Place of his Abode was at a considerable Distance from that City, he constantly made a Journey thither at the Time of their solemn Festivals. And as he was careful to observe the ritual Ordinances of the Law: so he yielded a most exact and perfect Obedience to the moral Precepts of it.

AND indeed had he not punctually fulfilled the Righteousness of that Law under which he was made, he would himself have stood in Need of a Redeemer; and consequently could not have answer'd the End of his coming into the World; which was to redeem those that were under the Law, that we might receive

receive the Adoption of Sons; (and this
is the

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THIRD Particular I propos'd to speak
to.)

ALL who had ever liv'd under the Law, Jesus Christ only excepted, had in some Instance or other transgress'd it; and so had render'd themselves obnoxious to the Curse denounc'd against those who should in any one Point offend against it. To deliver them from this Curse our Lord voluntarily suffered Punishment in their Stead, the Innocent instead of the Guilty; and by Dying on the Cross, became in the Eye of the Law an accursed Person; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a Tree.

TOGETHER with Christ expir'd the Ceremonial Law; which was both a heavy Yoke upon the *Jews*, and a Wall of Partition between them and the Gentiles. So that by the Death of Christ the *Jews* were freed from the Bondage as well as the Curse of the Law, and called to enjoy the Liberty and Privileges of Sons.

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THE Gentiles were Strangers to the Covenant of Promise, and had long since revolted from the Worship of the true God to Idolatry. Wherefore the *Jews* imagin'd that *they* were (esteem'd by God as Spittle, and that they were) to have no Share in the Blessings of the Messiah's Kingdom. But the middle Wall of Partition being broken down by the Cross, the Distinction between *Jew* and Gentile ceased, and they both became by Faith one Body of Christ, one Church and Household of God; the Gentiles were admitted to equal Privileges with the *Jews*; and those who had been hitherto far off from God, as well as those who were near to him receiv'd the Adoption of Sons.

MANY and inestimable are the Privileges, to which the adopted Sons of God are entitled. The Residence of the Holy Spirit in their Hearts is both a Pledge of their Heavenly Father's Love to them at present, and an earnest of the glorious Inheritance which he will bestow upon them hereafter. By Him they have free
Access

Access unto God in Prayer, and are encourag'd to address themselves to Him in the familiar and endearing Language of Sons, saying *Abba Father*. By the same Spirit they are sanctified both in Body and Soul, and made like unto God; the Divine Image is restored in them, and they are known to be the Children of God by the Resemblance which they bear to Him. And *they* who, while they live here, are like to God in Holiness, shall one Day even in their mortal Parts bear the Image of his Immortality; and shall be further manifested to be the Sons of God, by being the Sons of the Resurrection. *He* who is the God not of the Dead but of the Living, will not suffer his Children to continue for ever under the Power of Death; but will in his due Time work for them a glorious Liberty from the Bondage of Corruption, and place them beyond the Reach and Fear of Death and Pain and Sorrow, in Heavenly Mansions, where they shall be for ever happy, not only in an entire Freedom from all Evil, but in the secure Posses-

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Possession of all that is Good. If they be Sons, our Apostle rationally concludes, that they shall be Heirs of God, and Joynt-Heirs with Christ, who is the Heir and Lord of all Things.

(I HAVE now gone thro' the three Particulars which I at first propos'd to speak to. From what hath been said upon each of them may be drawn several useful Inferences, with which I shall conclude this Discourse.

AND, First,) the coming of our Lord in the Fulness of Time is a strong Confirmation of the Faith of Christians, and renders inexcusable the obstinate Infidelity of the *Jews*. (That there are in the *Old Testament* such Predictions as I have cited, and that they are genuine, and were not invented neither have been corrupted by Christians, the *Jews* themselves, from whom we receiv'd them, cannot but acknowledge ; and that these Predictions were understood by the ancient Jewish Doctors as we understand them, their Writings still extant, do abundantly prove. And it is well known that

that in our Saviour's Time the whole Nation of the *Jews* did expect that the Messiah would suddenly appear; which plainly shews that they were of Opinion, that the Time assign'd by the Prophets for His coming was then expiring.) Will the *Jews* blame us either for giving Credit to the Divine Oracles, or for believing in Him to whom they bear Witness; (or for embracing *that* Interpretation of them which was formerly put upon them by their own most approved Expositors, and particularly by *that* Generation of Men, who were bitter Enemies to Jesus Christ and persecuted Him to the Death?) Ought not *they* who affirm with us that not one Tittle of the Law or of the Prophets shall fail, either to acknowledge our Jesus to be the Messiah, or to direct us to some other Messiah, who appeared within the Time limited by the Law and the Prophets? If the Time appointed for the Messiah's coming be long since laps'd, why do they still continue to expect him? And if they themselves had not for many Years believ'd the Time to be laps'd,

would

— would they, think we, have expected
 SERM. him daily for seventeen hundred Years
 XII. together?
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Secondly, THE Honour which Jesus Christ hath done to our Nature, by taking it upon him, lays us under a strict Obligation not to dishonour it by any kind of Intemperance or Uncleannefs. It can be no small Crime to bring a Reproach upon *that* Nature, which the Son of God hath so highly dignified, and to debase it below that of the (fourfooted) Beasts which perish.

THE same Consideration may serve to raise in us a firm Hope of a happy Resurrection. If it be a Mortification to us to call Corruption our Father, and the Worm our Sister, it is on the other hand a mighty Consolation to us to consider that He who liveth for ever, and hath the Keys of Death and of Hell, is our Brother. Nor can we entertain so mean an Opinion of human Flesh, as to think it incapable of inheriting Glory and Immortality, when we reflect, that in human Flesh dwelleth the Fulness of the God-

God-head. Our Bodies it is true are the least valuable Parts of us; they were form'd at first out of the Dust, and after a short Space return to it. Yet ought we not from hence to infer, that our Lord will not think them worth the Saving, since it cannot be more beneath Him to redeem a Body from the Grave, than it was to assume one himself, and to be united to it for ever.

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(THAT the Only-begotten of the Father, who was born before every Creature, by whom and for whom all Things were made, should freely for a Time lay aside his unspeakable Majesty, take part of Flesh and Blood, load Himself with the Infirmities and Miseries of our Nature, and submit to all the burthensom and painful Rites of the Ceremonial Law; This indeed was such an Act of Humiliation as we can never enough admire, and which we ought ever to have before our Eyes, that from thence we may learn to stoop to the meanest Offices, and to undergo the greatest Difficulties and Inconveniencies for the Good of our Brethren;

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thren; That the same Mind may be in us which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the Form of God made himself of no Reputation, and took upon him the Form of a Servant, and was made in the Likeness of Men.)

(As it was a wonderful Condescension in the Son of God to be made of a Woman: so most glorious was the Privilege of that thrice happy Woman of whom He was made. No sober Christian can possibly either speak or think otherwise of Her, than as of a Person highly favour'd of God. The Mother of Him whom we adore is without question highly to be honour'd, and all Generations must call her Blessed. Yet it is to be remembred, that she was no more than a Woman; and we cannot without Idolatry pay to the Woman *that* Worship which is due only to the Divine Person who was born of her.)

{ WHAT hath been said under the third Head, concerning the great End and Design of Christ's coming, will suggest to us a satisfactory Answer to an Objection

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tion frequently urg'd against Christianity
both by its ^{antient} and modern Adver-
saries; ^{to whom}, it seems, it has always
appear'd incredible, that a Person of so
high Dignity as the Son of God should
consent to become Man, to live in a
mean and despicable and afflicted Con-
dition, and at length to dye the Death of
a Malefactor.——But was it a Work
unworthy of this great Person to redeem
a miserable World? (And was it not fit-
ting that He who was to instruct Men in
their Duty, and to guide them to eternal
Happiness, should for a while dwell and
converse with them, and live in such a
Condition as might give him an Oppor-
tunity to become an illustrious Pattern
of the most neglected and difficult Vir-
tues? Was it not reasonable too, that *He*
who was to deliver Sinners from the
Wrath of God, should some way or
other make Attonement for those Sins
which had provoked it? And how could
He do that better, nay how can we be
sure that He could do it any otherwise,
than by Suffering instead of the Offen-
ders?

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ders?) It was no trivial Concern which brought our Lord from Heaven to Earth; nothing less than the Salvation of Mankind was the Design of His coming into the World. Is it then at all credible, that the Son of God should propose to himself a most noble and glorious End, and not make use of the wisest and most effectual Means for the Accomplishment of it?

THERE is therefore but small Force of Argument in this Objection, but there is a great deal of Ingratitude in it. For shall we take Occasion from the Condescension of the Son of God to despise and reject Him; and to make the Greatness of his Love to us a Pretence for refusing Obedience to his Laws? Surely the lower He humbled himself for our Sakes, the higher in all Reason ought our Gratitude to rise. (If we have the least Spark of Ingenuity in us, it will be our constant Endeavour that the whole Earth may be full of *His* Glory, who became the Son of Man that we might become Sons of God; who quitted the Glo-

ries

ries of Heaven for a Manger, for a Cross, ———
that He might wash us from our Sins in SERM.
his own Blood. What Language can XII.
express such noble Acts? What Tongue
of Men or of Angels can shew forth all
the Praise due to ineffable Goodness, the
Breadth and Length and Depth and
Height of which pass even the Know-
ledge of a finite Mind?) Certainly we,
who were the Objects of this superlative
Goodness, can do no less than devote our
whole Lives to the Service of our gene-
rous Benefactor. And since we can ne-
ver requite Him, we should spare no
Pains to please Him, nor think any thing
too much to do or to suffer for his Sake.
No Punishment can be thought too se-
vere for us; there will be no room for
us to expect any Mercy, if we are not
to be oblig'd by numberless and inva-
luable Benefits; if Offices of unparallel'd
Friendship done for us while we were
Enemies, cannot endear our Friend to
us; if Love stronger than Death cannot
extort from us some suitable Returns of
Thankfulness, Love and Obedience.

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NOT only Gratitude to our Redeemer, but the Nature of that happy Condition to which He hath called us, exacts from us a Life of strict Holiness and Obedience to the Divine Laws. If we are Sons of God, we must be punctual in the Discharge of the Duties resulting from that Relation; otherwise we must look for no Blessing from Him. To call God Father, while we live in Disobedience to his Commands, is in effect to bring an Accusation against our selves; for if He be a Father, where is his Honour?

A COURSE of Iniquity renders us incapable of bearing so near and honourable a Relation to the Deity. Regeneration is a necessary Preparative for Adoption; nor can we be the Sons of God, unless we are born again of the Spirit. As many as are led by the Spirit, saith, *St. Paul*, are the Sons of God. For by the Spirit we are made Partakers of a Divine Nature, and the Divine Perfections are stamp'd upon our Souls. The resembling God in our Dispositions and Actions, the imitating Him as dear
Chil-

Children, is the surest Demonstration that we are born of Him. Both the Children of God and the Children of the Devil will do the Works of their Father; by which they are easily distinguished one from the other.

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Again, If we are Sons of God, this may encourage us to lay before Him all our Wants and Grievances, and to put up our Petitions to Him with firm Confidence, that we shall receive from Him whatever is necessary and convenient for us. For, as our Lord very strongly argues, *What Man is there, who, if his Son ask Bread, will give him a Stone? Or if he ask a Fish, will give him a Serpent? If then Men that are evil know how to give good Gifts unto their Children, how much more shall our Father which is in Heaven give good Things unto them that ask him?* Add to this, that we have such an Intercessor with the Father, as we our selves, if we understood our own Interest, would wish for, even Jesus Christ the Righteous; who being by Nature the only Son of God, cannot

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fail of obtaining whatsoever He shall request for us; who being also the Son of Man, is most ready to do what in Him lies for us his Brethren. Of his benign and merciful Disposition, and of his tender Concern for Mankind in particular, He gave abundant Proof, when He took on him, not the Nature of Angels, but the Seed of *Abraham*. And we may be sure that his Compassions are not abated, by the Experience He hath had of the Sorrows and Uneasinesses incident to our Condition. He hath not forgotten, it is impossible He should forget the Agonies which pierced him through in the Days of his Flesh, and from which He prayed again and again to be delivered with strong Crying and Tears. Having therefore himself deeply tasted of Misery, He is strongly inclined to pity and to succour the Miserable.

Furthermore, THE Consideration that we are Sons of God, may be of special Use to support and comfort us under all Troubles and Calamities. The Bitterness of Afflictions will be very much allay'd, when

when we can look upon them as the Chastisements or Trials of a loving Father. God is never kinder to us than when He exercises us with Adversity, either for the Amendment of our Faults, or for the Improvement and Manifestation of our Virtues. It has ever been usual with Him to train up his dearest Sons to Glory by the Discipline of the Cross. Even Jesus Christ his only Begotten, in whom He was always pleased, and in whom was no Sin, learned Obedience by the Things which he suffered. He was long a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief, before He was advanced above all Principality and Power. And were we truly wise, we should not desire to be entirely exempted from those Allotments of Providence, which are indeed the Evidences of our Sonship, and Tokens of the Almighty's Love to us. We should be rather apt to be uneasy, and to suspect the Worst of our Condition, if God did not sometimes deal with us, as he is wont to do with those whom He acknowledges for his Children.

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Well may we bear not only with Patience, but with Thankfulness those Corrections, which are intended for our Benefit; and we may even glory in those Persecutions and Tribulations, which speak us the Darlings of the Almighty, and by which we are conformed to the Image of his best beloved Son.

Lastly. SINCE we are all of us Sons of one and the same God, let us love like Brethren. Since we all pretend to be guided and govern'd by the same Spirit, the Spirit of Adoption, let us shew that we are so, by being like-minded, by mutual Kindness, Charity and Forbearance. Since we all make up but one great Family, let us study to promote the Peace and Union of that Family to which we belong. Nothing can be more prejudicial to the Interests of the Household of God, than the dividing it against itself. Since we are all entitled to the same glorious Promises, and are Co-heirs of the Heavenly Inheritance, let us converse together in this World,

in the Fulness of Time.

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as Persons who hope to meet in another,
and to be happy in the Society of each
other to all Eternity.

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WHICH God grant that we may all
be, for the Sake of Jesus Christ; To
whom, &c.

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ad



S E R M O N XIII.

A Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Holy Sacrament.

I C O R. X. 16.

The Cup of Blessing which we bless, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ? The Bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ?

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THESE Words do unquestionably relate to the Celebration of the Christian Eucharist. And tho' they are in the Form of an Interrogation, yet are they in effect a strong Affirmation, that the

the Cup of Blessing which we bless, is the Communion of the Blood of Christ; and that the Bread which we break, is also the Communion of his Body. In which Proposition are either express'd or plainly implied these five following Particulars.

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1. THAT material Bread and Wine are to be used in the Christian Eucharist.

2. THAT in the Lord's Supper both the Elements of Bread and Wine are to be given and received.

3. THAT the Eucharistical Elements are not ordinary Bread and Wine, nor the Lord's Supper a common Meal, but a sacred and religious Feast.

4. THAT the Lord's Supper is not rightly celebrated by a single Person alone, but by a Number of Communicants.

5. THAT the Bread in the Holy Eucharist is the Body of Christ, and the Wine his Blood.

First THEN, I observe, that material Bread and Wine are to be used in the
Christ.

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Christian Eucharist. For *St. Paul* is here discoursing of material Oblations. He is drawing a Parallel between the Christian Sacrifice, and the Sacrifices offered among the *Jews* and *Heathens*; which were certainly material. 'Tis true indeed, that Knowledge is by a Figure called the Food of the Soul, and we are said to feed on Christ by Faith; and it is absolutely necessary that we should thus feed on Him in the Eucharist. But neither can we rightly celebrate that holy Mystery, without the use of corporeal Food. By the Bread therefore which we break, and the Cup of Blessing which we bless, must of Necessity be understood material Bread and Wine. For we cannot be said to bless or to break either Knowledge, or Faith.

THE Account which our Apostle gives of the Institution of the Lord's Supper in the xith Chapter of this Epistle is, That the Lord Jesus took Bread; and when he had given Thanks he brake it, and said, Take, eat. After the same manner also He took the Cup when he

had

had supped, saying, This Cup is the *New* Testament in my Blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in Remembrance of me. With this agree the Accounts given by three of the Evangelists, which are almost in the same Words. Now they who can set aside the obvious literal Meaning of these plain historical Passages, turning them all into Allegory, and maintaining that they require nothing more of Christians than a spiritual Feeding on Christ, may make any Words to signify what they please; and it is in vain to dispute with such Persons. This Point is so exceeding plain, that barely to cite the Words of Scripture, without arguing from them, is sufficient to prove it to all unprejudiced Understandings.

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Nor is it less evident,

Secondly, THAT in the Lord's Supper both the Elements of Bread and Wine are to be given and receiv'd by all; by the Laity as well as the Clergy. The same Texts from which it may be proved, that the Laity ought to partake of the Bread, do as strongly prove that they ought

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ought to partake of the Cup also. It is certain, that our Lord instituted the Sacrament in both Kinds; and particularly that when he took the Cup and blessed it, he commanded *all* who were present to drink of it. Drink ye *all* of this. And the Reason which He gave for this Precept, extends universally to all without Exception. For this, says he, is my Blood of the *New Testament*, which is shed for you and for many for the Remission of Sins. Now without all Controversy the Blood of Christ was shed for the Remission of the Sins of the Laity as well as of the Clergy. ——— Moreover, it appears both from the Words of the Text, in which both the Cup and the Bread are expressly mentioned, and from the Account given in the following Chapter, that in the Times of the Apostles this Sacrament was administered in both Kinds, agreeably to our Lord's Institution. And this Practice continued in the Church for many Ages after Christ. Nay it was very late before the Church of *Rome* herself innovated in this Matter.

All

All this is so notorious, that the Romanists themselves are forc'd to acknowledge the Truth of it. Yet do they obstinately persist in denying the Cup to the People; thereby robbing them of one half of the Sacrament. The most they have to plead in Defence of this Sacrilege is, That their Church may order the Sacraments to be administred in what manner she pleases; and that the Lord's Supper is compleat without the Cup, because the People do receive the Blood of Christ in the Body. But now they who pretend to a Power to deprive the People of the Cup, may by the same Power deprive them of the whole Sacrament, and of Baptism too, and of all the other Means of Grace instituted by Christ. But surely it is intolerable Presumption and Impiety too, in any Church to claim an Authority to contradict Christ himself, to repeal his Laws, and annul or alter his Constitutions. If, as these Men pretend, Communicants may be Partakers of a whole and perfect Eucharist without partaking of the Cup, why do they order
their

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their Priests to drink of it? And, which is more considerable, why did our Lord Jesus Christ himself command *all* to drink of the Cup? It is plain both from the Text and from the several Accounts of the Institution of the Lord's Supper delivered by the Evangelists, that a Communion of Christ's Body only cannot be a compleat Eucharist. To that is necessarily required a Communion both of the Body and Blood of Christ. Nor can the People receive the Blood of Christ in the Body, as the Romanists suggest, since the Eucharistical Bread is Christ's Body broken, and consequently emptied of Blood; and the Eucharistical Cup is his Blood poured out of the Body. It is therefore exceedingly evident, that a Communion of the Body broken, without the Communion of the Blood poured out, is not a Communion of Christ's Body and Blood, but of his Body only. Whence it is undeniable that in the Church of *Rome* the People receive but one half of the Eucharist, and that we do justly charge their Priests with depriving them of the other half.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, I observ'd, THAT the Eucharistical Elements are not ordinary Bread and Wine, nor the Lord's Supper a common Meal; but a sacred and religious Feast.

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THAT it is a Feast upon a Sacrifice; seems clear from the Scope of the Apostle's Reasoning in my Text, and the Verses following: The Design of which is to prove the Unlawfulness of eating Things offered to Idols in the Idol Temples; which Practice he charges with Idolatry. My dearly beloved, says he, flee from Idolatry; I speak as to wise Men, judge ye what I say. The Cup of Blessing which we bless, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ? The Bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ? Behold *Israel* after the Flesh? Are not *they*, who eat of the Sacrifices, Partakers of the Altar? What say I then? That the Idol is any Thing, or that which is offered in Sacrifice to Idols is any Thing? But I say that the Things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they

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sacrifice to Devils, and not to God ; and I would not that ye should have Fellowship with Devils. The Apostle's Argument is plainly this. As Christians by partaking of the Bread and Wine in the Eucharist, declare themselves to be the Worshippers of *that* God to whom the Eucharistick Sacrifice is offered as a Memorial of the one meritorious and propitiatory Sacrifice of the Death of Christ ; and as the *Jews* by eating of the Sacrifices offered to the one true God, did acknowledge themselves to be Worshippers of that one true God : so likewise those who sat down in the Idol Temples, to eat of Things offered to Idols, did by that Rite own themselves Worshippers of those Idols. Which those who profess'd themselves Christians could not do without the greatest Inconsistency as well as Impiety. For those Idols were the Representatives, not of the true God, but of Devils ; who had erected a Kingdom in opposition to that of the true God ; whose Service therefore was incompatible with *his*. Wherefore, as the
Apostle

Apostle goes on, ye cannot, *i. e.* ye cannot consistently drink the Cup of the Lord, and the Cup of Devils; ye cannot be Partakers of the Lord's Table, and the Table of Devils. In which last Words, by the Cup of Devils is confessedly meant a Cup offered to Devils: Wherefore, by Analogy, the Cup of the Lord must mean a Cup offered to the Lord. By the Table of Devils, is undoubtedly to be understood the Altar upon which Sacrifice was offered to Devils. Wherefore, by Parity of Reason, by the Lord's Table is to be understood, the Altar upon which the commemorative Sacrifice of Christ's Body and Blood is offered to the Lord. Accordingly by *Clement* and *Ignatius*, Companions of the Apostles, and by other Writers who lived nearest to their Times; by the earliest Constitutions and Canons receiv'd by the Church (perhaps from the Apostles themselves) and by the most antient Liturgies us'd by the Church, probably from the Time of the Apostolic Age; the Eucharist is commonly styled an

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— Oblation and a Sacrifice; and the Eucharistical Elements are directly said to be offered to God by the Priest upon the Altar. It having been the unanimous Opinion of the whole Primitive Church in the first and purest Ages, that the Eucharist is a Sacrifice of Commemoration, even as the Offerings under the Law were Sacrifices of Prefiguration. The Christian Eucharist was ordain'd to be a perpetual Memorial and Representation of the one great Oblation of Christ himself offered once for all, as now past; as the Jewish Sacrifices were appointed to typify it beforehand, and to prefigure it as then to come. Our first Reformers too, who strove against Popery resisting unto Blood, had the same Sentiments; as the Liturgy compil'd by them, and us'd by our Church in the Reign of King *Edward* the Sixth sufficiently testifies.

—— To partake therefore of the Eucharist, is to feast not on meer Bread and Wine, but on a Sacrifice; and Sacrifice implies the highest Degree of Consecration; and Feasting thereupon has ever
been

been accounted in all Nations a principal Act of Religion. And accordingly the Celebration of this Sacrament hath from the Beginning been esteem'd by the Church the chief and most excellent Part of the Christian Worship. The Substance indeed of the Bread and Wine is the same after, as it was before Consecration; but several new Qualities are added to them which they had not before, and which cannot be ascribed to common Bread and Wine. By Christ's own Appointment they are the Representatives of his most precious Body and Blood; they are Signs and Seals of God's Covenant with us; they are Tokens and Pledges of his Favour, and, as I shall shew hereafter, are a Means of conveying to us all the inestimable Benefits purchased for us by the Passion and Death of Christ. It seems to have been the unanimous Opinion of Antiquity, that they are in an ineffable Manner sanctified by the powerful Operation of the Holy Spirit. What *Irenæus*, a Writer of the second Century, asserts, was probably

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the Sentiment of the whole Church in his Time, viz. That the Bread which is from the Earth, receiving the Divine Invocation, is no longer common Bread but the Eucharist, consisting of two Things; the one Earthly, and the other Heavenly: By the Earthly, meaning the material Bread; and by the Heavenly, the Grace of the Divine Spirit. Agreeably hereto, in the most antient Liturgy now extant, and which was probably in Use in and long before the Time of *Irenæus*, the Priest is directed in the Consecration Prayer to use these Words, which will sufficiently explain what *Irenæus* means by the Divine Invocation. We beseech thee that thou wilt mercifully look down upon these Gifts which are here set before thee, O thou God who standest in need of none of our Offerings; and accept them to the Honour of thy Christ; and send down thine Holy Spirit, the Witness of the Sufferings of the Lord Jesus, that he may make this Bread to become the Body of thy Christ, and this Cup the Blood of thy Christ; that

that those who are Partakers thereof may
be strengthened in Goodness, may obtain
the Remission of their Sins, may be de-
livered from the Devil and his Wiles,
may be filled with the Holy Ghost, may
be made worthy of thy Christ, and may
obtain eternal Life upon thy Reconcili-
ation to them, O Lord Almighty. The
Liturgy used in the Time of King *Edward*
the Sixth, expresses the same Thing thus:
Hear us, O merciful Father, we most
humbly beseech thee; and with thy Holy
Spirit and Word vouchsafe to bless and
sanctify these thy Gifts, that they may
be unto us the Body and Blood of thy
most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ.

AND this Opinion of the Primitive
Christians is very much countenanced and
supported by the Expressions used in the
Holy Scriptures. *St. Paul* in this very
Epistle plainly enough intimates, that they
who partake of the Eucharistical Cup are
all made to drink into one Spirit. And
our blessed Saviour assures us that it is
the Spirit which quickneth, and that the
Flesh, *i. e.* the Flesh without the Spirit,

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profiteth nothing.—'Tis observable that our Lord instituted this Holy Sacrament in a most solemn Manner. He blessed severally both the Bread and the Cup, after the Paschal Supper, and directed his Apostles, and in them their Successors in the Christian Priesthood to do what he then did, for a perpetual Memorial of him, and of the great Things which he both did and suffered for the Salvation of Mankind. Even as the Sacrifice and Feast of the Passover was instituted for a Commemoration of God's passing over the *Israelites* when he destroy'd the *Egyptians*, and his delivering them out of the House of Bondage. As our Lord hath commissioned his Priests to consecrate the Eucharist; so he has committed this Power to none but them. From the Beginning this Power hath been appropriated to the Bishops and Priests, and that Rule of *Ignatius*, a Disciple of St. *John*, hath been strictly observed; Let *that* Eucharist be accounted valid and good which is consecrated by the Bishop, or by one whom he appoints.

Again,

Again, IN this Epistle the Apostle declares, that whosoever shall eat this Bread, and drink this Cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord. But let a Man examine himself, and so let him eat of this Bread, and drink of this Cup. For he that eateth and drinketh Unworthily, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's Body. From all which it is abundantly evident that the Lord's Supper is far from being an ordinary Supper, and that the mean and low Notions which many of late have entertain'd of this most Holy and Tremendous Ordinance, are very contrary to the Declarations of Scripture, and the Sentiments of the Primitive Christians.

Fourthly, I OBSERV'D that the Lord's Supper is not rightly celebrated by a single Person alone, but by a Number of Communicants.

THE Christian Communion in the Eucharist is a Communion not only with God and with Christ, but with our Fellow Christians; as appears from the Verse
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immediately following my Text. The Bread which we break, says the Apostle in the Text, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ? And then he adds, For *we* being many, are one Bread and one Body, for we are all Partakers of that one Bread; *i. e.* As the consecrated Loaf, tho' compos'd of many Grains, is one; so all *we* who partake of it, tho' we are many Individuals, are united together into one mystical Body, by partaking of the one consecrated Loaf. Whence it plainly appears, that the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ, spoken of in the Text, is a Communion of a Number of Christians partaking of the same consecrated Bread. And it is likewise certain that this is most agreeable to the Design of the original Institution. For when this Sacrament was first instituted, all the Apostles were present at it; and our Lord commanded them all to partake both of the Bread and of the Wine. And from all the Accounts which we have in Scripture of the Celebration of this mysterious Act of Worship in the Apostolical Times,

it clearly appears that many joyn'd in it. And it is well known, that for a considerable Time after the Apostolical Age, *all the Faithful*, i. e. all who had been baptiz'd, except they were in a State of Pennance, were oblig'd constantly to receive the Communion, as often as they were present at the publick Service of the Church. The antient Canons are very strict and express to this Purpose. Among those which go under the Name of Apostolical Canons, and which are allow'd to be very antient, there is one which runs thus: All those of the Faithful who enter into the Church of God, and hear the Scriptures, but do not stay during Prayer and the Holy Communion, must be suspended, as Authors of Confusion in the Church. This Canon is repeated with some Addition by the Council of *Antioch*, held towards the middle of the fourth Century. All such as enter into the Church of God, and hear the Scriptures read, but do not communicate with the People in Prayer, and refuse to partake of the Eucharist, which is a disorderly

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derly Practice, ought to be cast out of the Church, till they confess their Fault, and bring forth Fruits of Repentance, and by earnestly entreating have obtained Pardon. — In after Ages, when the Discipline of the Church was much relax'd, and the Piety and Zeal of Christians abated, these Canons were neglected, and many turn'd their Backs upon the Altar, and went out of the Church without Communicating. Nay and sometimes the whole Congregation departed, and left the Priest alone. In which Case some ignorant and injudicious Priests proceeded in the Communion-Office, and partook of the consecrated Elements alone. And from this Abuse sprung those solitary or private Masses which have gain'd an Establishment in the Church of *Rome*; and which the Priests, because they are well paid for them, obstinately defend; tho' they contradict the Design of our Saviour's Institution, and have no Foundation either in Scripture or Antiquity; and tho' their own Forms or Offices are *so* compos'd as to suppose

a Congregation of Communicants present, and without that Supposition are in many Places or Parts of them downright Non-sense.

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I PROCEED now to the

Fifth and Last THING observable in the Words of the Text, *viz.* That the Bread in the Holy Eucharist is the Body of Christ, and the Wine his Blood.

It is expressly asserted in the Text, that the Cup of Blessing is the Communion of the Blood of Christ; and the Bread the Communion of the Body of Christ. And from the History of the Institution we learn, that our blessed Lord himself having blessed both the Bread and the Cup, declared them to be his Body and Blood. From these Scriptural Expressions and Declarations the Romanists infer, that the Eucharistical Bread and Wine are by Consecration changed into the Body and Blood of Christ. But it is strange that any, who attentively read and consider the History of the Institution, and the Circumstances there recorded, should put this Interpretation

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tation upon our Saviour's Words. For can any thing be more absurd and ridiculous than to imagine, that he held himself in his Hand, and gave to every one of his Apostles his whole Body to eat, when he sat with them alive at the Table all the while they were eating? Could *that* which he gave them be in a literal Sense his Body broken, when his Body was not as yet broken? Could *that* which was in the Cup be literally his Blood shed, when his Blood was not as yet shed? Or is it possible that *we* should now eat his natural Body broken, and drink his natural Blood shed, while he sits with them intire at the right Hand of God? Can his Blood be shed, and not shed at once? Can his Body be in Heaven and upon Earth at the same Time? Can his intire Body be in a Million of Places, and be given whole to a Million of Communicants in the same Instant? Do not our own Senses assure us that it is Bread, and not Flesh which we eat? That it is Wine, and not Blood which we drink in the Holy Sacrament? Are
not

not these Things proper Objects of our Senses? Or can any two Things be imagined more different and more easy to be distinguish'd from each other, than a little Piece of Bread, and the whole Body of a Man in its full Proportion and Dimensions? If our Senses are not to be trusted in so plain a Case, when are they to be trusted? Or how can we ever be certain of any Thing which is the Object of Sense? How, for Instance, can the Papists ever prove to us that these Words, *This is my Body*, are at all in the *New Testament*? The best Evidence we can have that these Words are really in Scripture, is the Evidence of Sense; We may see them there if we please with our own Eyes. But the Romanists cannot in Reason demand of us to accept of this Evidence, because in the Case before us they require us to disbelieve the concurrent Testimony of four Senses out of five.

Again, THE Proof of the Christian Religion depends upon the Evidence of Sense. For we therefore believe the
Christ.

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Christian Religion to be true, because it was confirm'd by a great Number of Miracles wrought in the Presence of many Eye-witnesses, whose Testimony hath been faithfully recorded and transmitted to Posterity. So that we cannot believe the Christian Religion to be true, till it is granted that our Senses are to be credited; And if our Senses are to be credited, then Transubstantiation is certainly false. So that the Romanists do most absurdly go about to perswade us of the Truth of Transubstantiation by an Argument, which if it be once allow'd to be good, destroys the Truth of the whole Christian Religion, of which they say Transubstantiation is a Part.

BUT further, this Doctrine is not only contrary to Sense and Reason, but to the very Words of Scripture. For our blessed Lord, when he distributed the Cup to his Disciples, saying, Drink ye all of it, for this is my Blood; adds, But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this Fruit of the Vine, until that Day when I drink it new with you in my Father's

Father's Kingdom. Whence it is clear, that *that* which our Saviour commanded his Apostles to drink was the Fruit of the Vine. In like manner St. Paul calls *that* which we eat in the Sacrament Bread; We are all, says he, in the Verse immediately following my Text, Partakers of that one Bread. And in the next Chapter he calls it Bread three times in the compass of three Verses. As often as ye eat this Bread and drink this Cup, ye do shew the Lord's Death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this Bread and drink this Cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord. But let a Man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup. From all which Passages of Scripture it is evident, that the Eucharistical Bread and Wine do not by Consecration lose their former Nature, but are at the very Time when they are receiv'd by the Communicants true Bread and Wine; and consequently are not substantially chang'd into the Natural Body and Blood of Christ.

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THAT the Primitive Christians acknowledged no substantial Change of the Eucharistical Elements may be proved by a multitude of plain Testimonies taken from the Writings of the antient Fathers*. To cite them all would be endless. I shall therefore only point out some few of those numerous Passages, and content myself with observing from them, that the antient Christians were so far from believing the Eucharist to be literally Christ's Body and Blood, that they thought it would have been a heinous Impiety to eat the Natural Body of Christ, and to drink his Blood; and believ'd that the Eucharistical Bread and Wine are therefore called the Body and Blood of Christ, because they are Figures, Representatives and Memorials of his Body and Blood. And indeed this Figure of Speech is frequently used by the Penmen of Holy Scripture as well as by other

* Vide apud Irenaei fragmenta, p. 469. Edit. Grabil. Orig. Hom. in Levit. Augustinus de Doct. Christiana Lib. 3. Tertullianus in Lib. 4to. advers. Marcionem. Cypriani Epist. 61.

other Writers. *Joseph* expounding the Dreams of *Pharaoh's* Servants, and of *Pharaoh* himself, says, The three Branches are three Days, and the three Baskets are three Days; the seven Kine are seven Years, and the seven Ears of Corn are seven Years. Our blessed Lord explaining the Parable of the Seed and of the Tares, says, The Seed is the Word, the Field is the World, the Reapers are the Angels, the Harvest is the End of the World: And of Himself he says, I am the Way, the Door, the true Vine. *St. Paul* in the beginning of this very Chapter assures us, That the *Israelites* drank of that Rock which followed them, and that *that* Rock was Christ. Innumerable Instances of this kind might be produced. But that which comes very near to our Purpose is, That this Way of Speaking was used by the *Jews* at the Celebration of their Passover; immediately after which, and in the Room of which the Christian Eucharist was instituted. At the Eating the Passover they used this Form of Words, This Passover

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— is our Saviour and our Refuge. [Vide
SERM. XIII. *apud Just. Martyr. Dial. cum Tryph.*]
— Not that they imagined that the Passover
was changed into the very Substance of
God their Saviour, but only that it was
a Memorial of *that* Deliverance which
God wrought for them at their coming
out of *Egypt*, and of that which was here-
after to be wrought for them by the
Messias. And when they ate the un-
leavened Bread, they said, This is the
Bread of Affliction which our Fathers did
eat in the Land of *Egypt*. By which
they could not mean, that *that* was the
very Bread which their Fathers eat many
hundred Years before, but only that it
was the Representative and Memorial of
that Bread. So that when our blessed
Lord at the Institution of the Eucharist
said, This Bread is my Body, and this
Cup is my Blood, Do this in Remem-
brance of me ; it was very natural for
the Apostles to understand his Meaning
to be this ; This Bread and this Cup are
the Symbols and Representatives of my
Body broken and my Blood shed for you.
And

And when I am gone from you, do you, ———
in like manner as I have done, consecrate SERM.
Bread and Wine to be the Memorials of XIII.
my Body and Blood offered for you. I
say it was natural for the Apostles to under-
stand our Lord thus, because this Way
of Speaking was common among the
Jews, and particularly they were accus-
tomed to it at the Celebration of the
Passover, to which the Christian Eucha-
rist succeeded. In all Languages, Sym-
bols and Representatives are usually cal-
led by the Names of those Things which
they represent. But there is still an
higher Reason why the Eucharistical
Symbols should be called Christ's Body
and Blood; and that is, That they are
not bare Types and empty Figures, but
they are in Power and Efficacy, tho' not
in Substance, that very Body and Blood
which they represent. For by the Di-
vine Appointment and Benediction, they
are available to all those Ends which
could be attain'd by feeding upon Christ's
Natural Body and Blood, were that ei-
ther possible or lawful. That we may

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the more distinctly apprehend this, it will be only necessary to observe, that among both *Jews* and *Gentiles* it was customary for the People to eat of the Sacrifices which they offered. By which Rite was signified on the one hand, that they devoted themselves to the Service of *that* God of whose Altar they partook; and on the other hand, that the God accepted them for his Guests, took them under his Protection, and granted to them those Favours and Blessings, for the obtaining of which the Sacrifice was offered. Under the Gospel there hath been only one bloody meritorious Sacrifice; the Sacrifice which our blessed Redeemer made of himself. Now it was impossible that Christians in after Ages should in a strict and literal Sense partake of the Sacrifice of Christ's Person, or if it had been possible, yet it would have been impious. For the removal of this Difficulty our Lord us'd this Expedient. He instituted a Sacrifice representing, and commemorative of, this one great Sacrifice; He substituted consecrated

ted Bread and Wine to be eaten and drank, instead of his Natural Body and Blood sacrificed for us. He took Bread and blessed it, and said, Take, eat, This is my Body which is given for you. Likewise He took the Cup and blessed it, and said, Drink ye all of this, for this is my Blood which is shed for you, Do this as oft as ye drink it for a Memorial of me. So that by Eating of this Bread, and Drinking of this Cup, we do to all Intents and Purposes partake of Christ's Body and Blood; we bring ourselves under the same Engagements to God, and are entitled to the same Favours and Benefits from Him, as if we did eat of that individual Sacrifice which Christ offered on the Cross. Thus the Cup which we bless is the Communion of the Blood of Christ, and the Bread which we break is the Communion of his Sacred Body. That which we engage to do in this Sacrament, is to dedicate ourselves to the Service of Almighty God; and the Benefits which we receive by it are the Remission of our Sins, the Assistances of

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Divine Grace, and a Principle of an happy Immortality. All which were purchased for us by the Sacrifice of Christ's Death, and are insur'd and convey'd to us by Religiously Feasting on this Memorial of it. But of these I shall not now Discourse. At present I shall only add, that the Consideration of the Excellency and great Importance of this Branch of Christian Worship, and of the mighty Benefits accruing to us thereby, should engage us to make a suitable Preparation for it, and to approach God's Altar with Reverence and Godly Fear; with Hearts full of Joy and Gratitude to *Him*, who gave his only begotten Son for our Redemption, and unto *Him* that loved us, and wash'd us from our Sins in his own Blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God and his Father. *To whom, &c.*

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Motives to Charity and Beneficence.

HEB. X. 24.

*Let us consider one another, to
provoke to Love and to good
Works.*

IF it be at all needful to make a Distinction between Love and good Works, let it only be observ'd, That by Love is to be understood *that* Affection or Disposition of Mind, which inclines and prompts Men to Works of Kindness and Charity ; and by good Works are signified those Acts of Beneficence which flow from Love. So that the Love and the good Works here spoken of,
differ

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— differ from one another no otherwise than
 — as a Cause and its natural Effect; as a
 — Principle, and *that* which is deriv'd from
 — it; as a Fountain and its Streams, or as
 — a Tree and its Fruits.

It hath been doubted by some, whether Works of Charity done out of Love to our Neighbour, and Commiseration of his Case, be acceptable to Almighty God. The Reason alledg'd for this Doubt is, That in order to render any Work acceptable to God, it is necessary that it be done in Obedience to his express Will and Command. But that this is a needless Scruple is evident from hence, That brotherly Love and Affection are themselves strictly commanded by God, and perfectly agreeable to his Will; wherefore also those Acts of Mercy, to which we are regularly excited by Love and Compassion, must be agreeable to his Will, and deem'd as perform'd in Obedience to Him, and consequently must be acceptable to Him. He hath planted in us those tender Affections of Love and Pity, on purpose that they might move
 and

and stir us up to Acts of Benevolence and Mercy; and He cannot but be well pleas'd when those Passions, which He himself hath rooted in our Nature, are effectual to those useful Purposes for which He design'd them. The Voice of Nature, of pure and uncorrupt Nature, is the Voice of God; and to obey *that*, is to obey God himself. When the same Things are enjoyn'd by the written Law of Revelation, and by the unwritten Law of Nature, which is the Case in numberless Instances, Scripture and Reason are *then* only different Ways of conveying to us the Knowledge of the Divine Will; and if we conscientiously and honestly fulfil the Divine Command, surely we obey God, and yield an acceptable Service to Him, whether we fulfil it as notified to us by the inspired Penmen of the Holy Scripture, or as discovered to us by the Light of Nature.

In setting forth the Duty of Christian Love and Beneficence, I shall have a principal Regard to that Part of it which consists in distributing to the Necessities
of

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of the Poor; tho' many Things which I shall deliver will be applicable to the other numerous Branches of Christian Charity.

THE Subject is so very copious, and comprehends under it such Variety of Arguments, that it is almost impossible to exhaust it. My Discourse at this Time shall be confin'd to the Reasonableness and Equity of this Duty.

IN order to convince ourselves of this, let us, First, consider who, and what kind of Creature he is, whose Distresses call for our Compassion and charitable Assistance. Why truly, no proper Object of Contempt; not one of the lowest Rank or Dignity in the Creation; but a Partaker of the same Nature with ourselves; and every one of human Race is of right noble Extraction, and born to great Things. The Hands of God have formed him, and his Life is a Particle of the Divine Breath. His Body, a curious and admirable Structure, is the Habitation of a Soul endued with wonderful Properties and Powers, and adorn'd with exqui-

exquisite Beauties and Perfections, indissoluble and immortal, next in degree to the Angelic Natures, near of Kin to the Eternal Being, and stamp'd with his Character and Likeness. How mean and vile soever the Disguise may be in which he appears, he is a Person of Heavenly Extraction; his Rags cover the Image of the Deity. He is of that Species of Creatures which God hath crown'd with Glory and Honour above the rest in this visible World; for whose Benefit and Use the World was made, and under whose Feet the Earth and every living Thing in it are put by Divine Appointment. If our Compassion be due to Brutes, as it certainly is on many Occasions; if Beasts and Birds are allow'd to have a Share in our Regards; Can it be imagined that *he*, for whom Beasts and Birds were created, hath no Claim to our Favour?

THE Court of Heaven does not account him beneath their Notice; Angels disdain not to minister to him. He is the Care of Providence; God himself vouch-

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vouchsafes to be his Guardian and his Friend. *He*, who never slumbers, watches over him; his Eyes are continually upon him, and his Ears are open to his Cries. And can we then think him unworthy of *our* Notice? Are the Miseries of such an one to be treated by us with Neglect?

WE mistake greatly if we reckon, that the Lowness of any one's outward Circumstances is a sufficient Reason for overlooking him. It may incline us to pity and succour him, but not to despise him. There is nothing in Poverty itself truly despicable or disgraceful. It has been the Lot of some of the best of Men that ever liv'd. The Saviour of the World was poor. The Lord and Maker of the Universe had not where to lay his Head. The Sceptre of the Majesty of God, saith a Companion * of *St. Paul*, came not in the Shew of Pride and Arrogance, tho' he could have done so, but with Humility. He preferr'd a mean and suffering Condition to Pomp and State
and

* S. Clemens in Epist. ad Corinthios.

and Plenty. Tho' he had existed in the Form of God from the Beginning, He chose to take on him the Form of a Servant. So that to a poor Man the Rich owe all the Advantages which they at present enjoy as Christians, and must owe all *that* Happiness and Glory which they hope for hereafter. All Mankind had been undone for evermore, had it not been for what a poor Man did and suffered for them. And it can never be reasonable to disregard any Man on account of his being made conformable to the Image of the Son of God, the Brightness of his Father's Glory, and the Friend of Mankind, to whom we are all of us eternally oblig'd.

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LET us examine impartially our own Thoughts and Opinions of our selves. Do we judge our selves to be Persons of no Account, whose Wants and Afflictions, if at any time Want and Affliction should befall us, deserve not to be considered? Why, such as we our selves are, such are *they* also who crave our Mercy. Whatever Difference there may be between

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— between *us* and them in external Circumstances, in Things accidental and mutable; *they* and we are alike in all Essentials; they are our Equals in all considerable Respects. Consider them either in their Natural or Christian State, there is scarcely more of Similitude and Parity between Individuals of any sort, than there is between Man and Man.

THE same Nature, the same Frame and Constitution of Being, is common both to Rich and Poor. The Bodies of the Poor are as fearfully and wonderfully made; their Souls are as precious in themselves and as dear to God, as those of the Rich. Both the Poor and the Rich are endued with the same Affections and Inclinations, with the same Faculties, Powers and Perfections. The Rich have not engrossed all Strength or Beauty, Activity or Dexterity; nor yet Understanding nor Knowledge, nor Learning nor Ingenuity nor Eloquence, nor Virtue nor Religion, nor any other Excellencies or Endowments either of Body or Mind.

ARE the Rich, Children and Heirs of God and Coheirs with Christ? So are the Poor. One God is the Author of Being to both; *He* who formed the one, fashioned the other also in the Womb. He made *both* after his own Likeness, and granted the same Dominion over the inferior Creatures to the one as to the other. Did the Son of God shed his Blood for the Rich? So did he also for the Poor. One Lord redeemed both. He paid the same Ransom and purchased the same Benefits for both. Are the Rich the Temples of the Holy Ghost? So are the Poor. One Spirit of God dwells in both, and sanctifies both, and communicates his Gifts indifferently, and with equal Liberality to them both.

THE same Means of Grace and Salvation are afforded to both. The same Word of God is preach'd to both. The same Rule of Life and Manners is prescrib'd to both. The same Faith is proposed to the Belief of both. By one Baptism, both are baptiz'd into one Body. In one Eucharist, *both* eat of the same

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— Bread of Life which is the Body of
— Christ; and *both* drink of the same Cup
— of Salvation, which is the Blood of Christ.
The same Covenants and Promises belong
to *both*, and *both* are called in one Hope
of their Calling. In all Particulars of
this Nature (and these are Things of the
greatest Consequence) there is no Dis-
tinction between them even in *this* Life.
And in the *next*, both shall stand upon a
Level at the Tribunal of Christ, to be
judged according to their Works; And
they that have done well, whatever their
outward Circumstances were in this World,
shall receive a never-fading Crown, and
a Kingdom which shall not pass away.

POSSIBLY the Poor may stand fairer
for this Kingdom, as being better quali-
fied for it than the Rich. The Scripture
seems to represent *this* to be most usually
the Case; and Experience confirms it to
be so. And when this is the Case, the
Difference between the Rich and Poor is
infinitely to the Advantage of the latter.
And when it is otherwise, when the
Poor, by acting unsuitably to the Dignity

of their Nature and of their Christian Calling, have render'd themselves unworthy of the Privileges conferr'd on them, and the Rewards propos'd to them; we ought not presently to exclude them from our Charity, but endeavour rather to reclaim them by our Kindness from their evil Courses, and to bring them to Repentance and Amendment of Life. For in many Things we offend *all*, and unless we obtain Mercy at God's Hands, must perish everlastingly. What we ask we should be willing to grant. We who stand in so great Need of Mercy ourselves, should not refuse it to our Fellow Creatures.

HUMAN Nature in the meanest Dress, in the lowest and most forlorn Condition, is to be treated kindly and respectfully, not only on the account of its intrinsic Worth and Dignity, but even for our own Sakes, because we cannot dishonour it in *their* Persons without dishonouring ourselves, who are Partakers of the same Nature with them; nor without setting an Example which may sometime hurt

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our selves; since we our selves also are liable to the same Infirmities, Wants and Afflictions, which it is their Unhappiness to suffer. Even in this Respect the Disparity between the Rich and Poor is not so considerable, as unobserving Men vainly imagine it to be. For *that* which is now the Condition of the Poor and Unfortunate, may soon be the Condition of the Rich and Prosperous. By a thousand unforeseen Contingencies the exterior Circumstances of both may be quickly changed. The Rich may soon be reduc'd to a low and necessitous State, and the Poor may be exalted in their Stead.

SUCH Changes and Revolutions in Human Affairs have often actually happen'd. All Ages and Countries afford many Instances of them. *Boast not of thy Cloathing and Rayment, saith the wise Son of Sirach, and exalt not thy self in the Day of Honour. For the Works of the Lord are wonderful, and his Works among Men are hidden. Many Kings have sat down on the Ground, and one that was never thought of hath worn the Crown.*

Crown. (Ecclus. xi. 4, 5.) Laugh no Man
to Scorn in the Bitterness of his Soul, for
there is One that humbleth and exalteth.

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He hath put down the Mighty from their
Seats, and exalted them of low Degree.
He hath filled the Hungry with good
Things, and the Rich he hath sent empty
away. The Lord maketh poor and maketh
rich, He bringeth low and lifteth up. He
raiseth up the Poor out of the Dust, and
lifteth up the Beggar from the Dunghill,
to set them among Princes, and to make
them inherit the Throne of Glory. This
Instability and Vicissitude of all Earthly
Things is a great Abatement of the Ad-
vantage which the Rich pretend to have
above the Poor with respect to these
Things, and sets them much nearer upon
a Level with them than they would
otherwise be.

Further yet, THE Rich and the Poor
are not only alike and equal in the Main,
but they are nearly related to each other,
and tyed together by the fastest Bands
both of fleshly and spiritual Kindred.
They meet together, as Solomon expresses

——— it, not only in this, That the Lord is the
 SERM. Maker of them all, but in *this* also, that
 XIV. ——— they are sprung from one common Stock
 and Parentage. The Prince and the Beg-
 gar are of one Blood and of one Flesh.
 Both originally were in the Loins of one
 Man, and proceeded from the same
 Womb. So proper and agreeable to the
 true natural State of Things is the Lan-
 guage of Scripture, which calls every
 other Man a Brother. All Christians are
 not only Brethren, but still nearer to
 each other than Brethren. *We* are all
 Members one of another, making up one
 Body, of which Christ is the Head, and
 which is animated and actuated by one
 Spirit. Here, there is neither Rich nor
 Poor, Bond nor Free, Noble nor Ignoble;
 but we are all one in Christ Jesus. The
 regular Consequence of our being one
 Body, enlivened and acted by one Spirit,
 is that we be of the same Mind one
 towards another, and shew ourselves
 heartily concern'd for each other's Wel-
 fare. So far is it from being true, as
 some have taught, that Men are naturally

End

Enemies to one another, or that Religion encourages or allows any sort of Uncharitableness, that quite the reverse is true and certain. Both by Nature and Religion all Men are Friends, and under the most indispensable Obligations to perform all Offices of Love and Kindness to each other. So that not only Enmity and Cruelty, but Indifferency and Unconcernedness for one another, proceed from Degeneracy of Nature, and Corruption of Religion.

GOD has implanted in us a strong Propension to Acts of Beneficence and Mercy. The Inclination to them is born with us, and rivetted fast in our Natures. When we see a miserable Object present itself, our Bowels are presently mov'd within us, we cannot help being sensibly affected with it, but are forcibly carried on to the doing what in us lies for the Relief of the distress'd Sufferer. Nor can we resist this inward Impulse, without offering Violence to our selves. And it is well known that Inclinations of this kind are strongest, and shew themselves

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most remarkably in the best and most excellent Persons. Now all the Tendencies and Desires of uncorrupt Nature are reasonable and just. God himself is the Author of them; and therefore it must be right to comply with them. The Almighty and Allwise Creator hath done nothing in vain; but hath on purpose interwoven with our original Constitution these tender Passions and Dispositions, that we might perpetually carry about us the most powerful Incentives to Works of Love and Benevolence. —

We experience oftentimes, when Opportunities of doing Good offer themselves, that our Mind, without any previous Reflection or Reasoning, immediately dictates to us what is Right. In a Moment we are conscious to ourselves that it is fitting for us to do what is in our Power for the Good of our Neighbour. We are not more sensible of Heat and Cold, than we are of our Obligations upon such Occasions. Our Duty in these Cases is as obvious and visible to the Understanding, as Light is to the Eye of the

the Body. This shews how very evident the Reasonableness of this Duty of Beneficence is. For *they* are of all others the clearest Truths, which the Mind perceives and embraces at once, and knows by Intuition, without any laborious Search after them, and without deducing them by a long Train of Conclusions from allow'd Principles.

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IF at any Time we have committed any Offence against the Rules of Charity; or have wilfully let slip the proper Opportunities of exercising it, our Conscience presently informs us that we have done amiss, and fails not to reproach us for it. On the other hand, when doing Good has been our Employment, and we have exerted ourselves in the Labour of Love, Conscience justifies and applauds us; and we dwell upon the Thoughts of what we have done with Pleasure and Satisfaction. Hence it appears what Judgment the Mind of Man readily passes upon Acts of Beneficence! 'Tis plain, that it judges and acknowledges them to be highly reasonable, and
that

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that the Oligation to them is founded on natural Equity. Why else should it condemn us for the Omission of them, or commend us for the Performance of them. If we were not in Reason and Equity bound to Works of Goodness and Mercy, what Ground of Uneasiness could the Omission of them be? Or what Ground of Satisfaction could the Performing them be, not to Christians only, but to those also who were never acquainted with the Gospel Revelation?

WHEN we ourselves have Occasion for the Kindness and good Offices of others, we count it very reasonable that, as they have Power and Opportunity, they should be helpful to us. Were we ourselves in Necessity or Danger, or under the Pressure of any Calamity or Affliction, we should not at all question but that we had a Title to be considered by those who were in a Capacity to relieve us. We should reckon it Cruelty and Inhumanity in those, who, when they were able, would not lend us an helpful Hand. Now *this* is Conviction enough that

that natural Reason and Equity require the Exercise of mutual Love and Charity. We are satisfied that *this* is a Debt due to *us* from others; whence it unavoidably follows, that in like Cases it is due from us to them. Upon whatsoever Accounts the Benevolence of our Fellow Creatures is owing to us, on the same Accounts is *our* Benevolence owing to our Fellow Creatures. The Equity of our Saviour's Rule is manifest, and not to be controverted, *Whatsoever ye would that Men should do to you, do ye even so to them.* This is an undoubted and self-evident Axiom, and will hold eternally and unalterably true, That what we may in Reason expect from our Neighbour, *that* in a Parity of Circumstances we ought not to with-hold from him. And did we carefully observe this Rule, we should be defective in no Duty or good Offices which are owing to our Neighbour. We should overlook the Miseries of none, whom our Duty oblig'd us, and our Circumstances enabled us to relieve; and we should seldom err much, either
in

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in the Timing or the Proportioning our Charity.

THE Reasonableness and Equity of the Duty I am recommending will be further manifest by considering; what the Distinction is between the Rich and the Poor; whence it comes, and to what Purposes it serves; who is the Giver of Riches, and for what Ends and Uses they are given; by what Tenure the Possessors of them hold them, and what Services and Acknowledgments they are bound to yield for them.

THERE is no natural or essential Difference between the Rich and the Poor. They are distinguish'd only in Externals and Circumstantials, in Things which are no Parts of themselves. In Things essential and of great Moment they are alike and equal, as I have already shewn at large. That some inherit or acquire ample Fortunes, and others are in narrower Circumstances, is owing to the Appointment of God's Allwise Providence, who disposes of all Things and Persons as it pleases him, and who, had he

he thought fit, could have allotted a
mean State of Life to the Rich and
Honourable, and could have set those
who are of low Degree in higher Stations.
To some he hath given Abundance, to
others a more scanty Portion of worldly
Goods, that human Society might be
closely cemented and link'd fast together;
that the several Members of it might
reciprocally serve each other, and that a
continual Intercourse and Exchange of
good Offices might subsist between them;
that the Indigent might by their Services
be helpful to the Wealthy, and the
Wealthy by their Liberality be helpful
to the Neceſſitous; and that there might
be Room for the Trial of Mens Dispo-
ſitions, and Opportunity for the Exerciſe
of their Virtues; of the Industry, Con-
tentment, Patience, Submission and Thank-
fulneſs of the Poor; and of the Mode-
ration, Gentleneſs, Benevolence and Mer-
cy of the Rich. — As God is the
ſupreme Lord and Proprietor of all Things
and Creatures: ſo Riches as well as other
good Things are his Gift. He is good
and

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and bountiful to all, but not to all equally. On some he heaps temporal Blessings; to others, he deals them out with a more sparing Hand. But still there is all imaginable Reason to conclude it to be his Will, that *they* to whom he hath communicated Life, should some way or other be supplied with what is sufficient for the Preservation of it, while he thinks good to continue it to them. If therefore we will weigh the Case impartially, we cannot otherwise account for God's bestowing on some more than is sufficient for them, than that their Abundance might be a Supply for the Wants of others. And if we were not partial to our selves, we could never think it reasonable, or agreeable to the Divine Will, that we should abound in Superfluities and wallow in Excess, while others, perhaps more worthy of God's Favours, perish for want of Necessaries.

God's Property in the Things which he hath made, can never be lost or alienated from him. When he gives them to us, he does not cease to be the supreme
Lord

Lord and Owner of them. He does not
constitute *us* absolute Masters of them,
but entrusts us with the Management of
them in such manner as he directs. With
respect to him we are not Proprietors, but
Stewards only of the Things which we
possess; and as such are in Justice bound
to use them as he is pleased to appoint.
All who have receiv'd of God any sort of
Gift by which they may be profitable to
others, are nearly concern'd in that Pre-
cept of St. Peter, *As every Man hath re-
ceiv'd the Gift, even so minister the same
one to another, as good Stewards of the
manifold Grace of God.* — Now we are
expressly required to give Alms of such
Things as we have; to minister as of the
Ability which God giveth; to lay by in
Store for Charitable Uses, according as
God hath prospered us; to do Good to
all Men as we have Opportunity; to be
rich in good Works, ready to distribute,
willing to communicate; to provide for
ourselves Bags which wax not old, a
Treasure in the Heavens which faileth
not; to make to ourselves Friends of the
Mam-

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Mammon of Unrighteousness. — To do this is, in our Saviour's Phrase, to be faithful and wise Stewards; and he charges those who neglect to do this with downright Injustice. For thus he expresses himself in his Application of the Parable of the unjust Steward; *I say unto you, Make to yourselves Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting Habitations. He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous Mammon, who will commit to your Trust the true Riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another's, who shall give you that which is your own?*

THE Measures of our Charity, God hath no where precisely determin'd. He hath plainly commanded, that we should communicate some Share of our Substance to the Necessitous, but the Proportion is left in a manner to our own Determination. And it behoves us to determine

mine this Point faithfully and conscientiously. For tho' in the Eye of human Laws we shall not be guilty of Injustice for not duly proportioning our Charity to our worldly Circumstances; yet God will not hold us innocent; but will deal with us as unfaithful Stewards, for not dispensing the Substance committed to us according to his Will and Appointment. For the Time is coming when we must give an Account to the Omniscient Judge of the World, how we have employ'd that Wealth which He hath committed to our Trust. And a sad Account shall we make, if we have either secreted, or consum'd upon our Vanities or Vices what was design'd by Him for the Benefit and Relief of the poor-suffering Members of Jesus Christ.

I SHALL offer but one Consideration more to shew the Reasonableness and Equity of doing Good to those who are in Want, which shall be drawn from God's Love and Kindness and Munificence to *us*. We have all of us receiv'd many invaluable Favours from Almighty

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God.

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—SERM. XIV.— God. Ought we not then to be Imitators of that Goodness to which we are infinitely oblig'd, and which is the Source of all our Blessings? Ought not *we*, who intirely subsist upon Goodness, to be Good ourselves, and to do Good to the utmost Extent of our Sphere and Capacity? Ought our Hand to be ever open to receive, and shut when we should give? Ought not *we*, who have in numberless Instances experienced the Kindness and Mercy of our Heavenly Father, to shew Kindness and Mercy to our Fellow Creatures and Fellow Servants?

THOSE who have receiv'd Abundance from God, are abundantly indebted to his Goodness. Unmerited Favours lay us under an Obligation. By accepting Benefits we contract a Debt of Gratitude to our Benefactor; to the Payment of which both Reason, Conscience and Equity very strongly oblige us. Now we cannot possibly make any Requital to God for his manifold and inestimable Kindness to us. For our Goodness extendeth not to Him; nor is it in our Power to be profitable

fitable to our Maker. We can no way
 so well express our Thankfulness to Him SERM.
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 for all his Blessings and Mercies, as by
 shewing Kindness to our distress'd Bre-
 thren; in whose Concerns He so far in-
 terests himself, that He looks upon any
 Kindness shewn to them as done to Him-
 self, and mercifully vouchsafes to place
 it to our Account. He that giveth to
 the Poor, saith *Solomon*, lendeth to the
 Lord; and look what he layeth out,
 it shall be paid him again. This, 'tis
 true, is no manner of Recompence for
 his Favours; but it is the most proper
 and suitable Return we can make Him,
 as being the most substantial Testimony
 we can give of the grateful Sense we en-
 tertain of his unbounded Goodness and
 Bounty to us. Hereby we approve the
 Reality of our Gratitude to God, by of-
 fering to Him not only the Fruit of our
 Lips, but by being at some Expence,
 and by parting with something valuable
 for His sake.

AND is it not very meet and right,
 that we should give to God of his own

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Gifts?

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Gifts? That we should render to *Him*, who giveth us all Things richly to enjoy, our due Acknowledgments, thro' the Hands of those whom He hath appointed to be his Receivers? That we should spare what is redundant to ourselves, to make up what is wanting to those who ask in *His* Name, who crave for *His* Sake, that hath made our Cup to overflow, and hath measur'd into our Bosom full Measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over?

IF it be grievous to us to give, how much more grievous would it have been, had we been forc'd to ask? And yet this might have been the Case. God could easily have set the Poor in our Place, and us in theirs, and have sent us to them for Relief. Surely then the least we can do is to exercise our Charity, out of Respect and Gratitude to Him, who chose to make us Dispensers of Charity rather than the Objects of it. If before we came into the World, God had put it to our Choice, of which Number we would be, Of the Givers, or of the Recci-

Receivers? Should we not have made it
our Option to be of the Number of
Givers? Since then God hath been so
indulgent to us, as to place us in the
Rank of Givers, is it not perfectly Right
that we should give? It is our Happi-
ness that God hath allotted to us that
blessed Part of Giving rather than of
Receiving; and ought we not joyfully
to execute that good Office; the Execu-
tion whereof is our Privilege as well as
our Duty?

THUS it appears that on very many
Accounts the Exercise of Charity is
reasonable and equitable. By Christians
especially Acts of Charity are to be es-
teem'd Acts of Justice. In Scripture,
God often and expressly enjoins them.
And since He is the original Proprietary
and Paramount Lord of the Universe,
His Law is certainly sufficient to vest
the Poor in a rightful Claim to them.
Accordingly we may observe, that in
many Places both of the *Old* and *New*
Testament, charitable, merciful and boun-
tiful Men, are described under the Cha-

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Character and Denomination of Righteous Men, and Charity itself is called Righteousness.

SALUTARY and sweet are the Fruits of this Righteousness, which will also endure for ever. Should some sad Calamity at once sweep away what we have been many Years gathering together, then *that* only will remain to us which with open Hearts and Hands we have dispers'd abroad. *That* will be safely repositied for us beyond the Reach of Chance and Accident. *That* will make sure Friends for us, and will be transmitted to a Place where neither Rust nor Moth doth corrupt, and where Thieves do not break thro' and steal. It will moreover be a present Comfort to us, and will sustain and refresh our Spirits under our Losses and Pressures, to remember that we made a due Use of our Wealth while it remain'd with us, and that we were faithful Stewards and Dispensers of it; and to consider that we may on good Grounds hope to receive the Reward of our Fidelity, and to reap

in another State answerably to the good
Seeds which we have sown here.

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THAT we may all of us thus abound
in this Work of the Lord, and finally
receive from his Mercy the everlasting
Fruits of our Righteousness, God grant
for the Sake of our blessed Redeemer.
To whom, &c.

D d 4 SERM.

S E R M O N . XV.

The Character and Qualifications of a good Magistrate.

EXOD. XVIII. 21.

Thou shalt provide out of all the People able Men, such as fear God, Men of Truth, hating Covetousness; and place such over them to be Rulers of Thousands, and Rulers of Hundreds, Rulers of Fifties, and Rulers of Tens.

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— **I**T appears from the foregoing Part of this Chapter, that originally *Moses* alone was vested with the Judicial Power among the *Israelites*; and that at the first

first he himself alone exercis'd it; hearing and determining all the Controversies which arose among so numerous a Multitude. His Father-in-Law *Jethro* was sensible that the Fatigue of so much Business would quickly wear him out; wherefore he advises him to ease himself of the Burden, by committing the Power of Judging to inferior Magistrates, from whom, in Cases of great Difficulty and Importance, there should lie an Appeal to himself. The Advice of *Jethro* was approv'd of by God, who ordered *Moses* to follow it. So that the Words of the Text, which are a part of that Advice, may justly be look'd upon as the Voice of God himself, declaring to *Moses* the Qualifications which Magistrates ought to be possess'd of. They are to be able Men, fearing God, Men of Truth, and hating Covetousness. Of each of which Particulars I shall speak in the Order in which they lie in the Text.

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THE Abilities here requir'd are, I suppose, principally, if not solely, those of the Mind. For in the parallel Place
in

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in the first Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, those who are here called able Men, are styl'd wise Men and understanding. And indeed the Nature of their Office evidently requires that they should be Persons of good Capacity, Judgment and Experience in Publick Affairs; well skill'd in Divine and Human Laws, especially in the Rules of Natural Justice and Equity, and in the Laws of their own Country; sagacious to discover the true Designs of Mens Actions, and the Reality and Circumstances of Facts; able to judge aright of the Quality and Tendency of them, and to distinguish clearly, not only between the several Degrees of Guilt, but also to separate Wilfulness from Accident and Necessity, or unavoidable Ignorance and Mistake.

Farther, By able Men, say approv'd Expositors, are to be understood Men of Spirit and Courage faithfully to discharge the Duties of their Office, whatsoever Opposition they may meet with, or whatsoever Inconveniencies or Losses they may suffer for so doing. And indeed many

many Occasions may call the Magistrate to give Proof of his Resolution and Intrepidity. It requires no small Degree of Magnanimity, Firmness and Constancy to protect the Oppressed against *him* that is too strong for him; to break the Jaws of the Wicked, and to pluck the Spoil out of his Mouth; to execute the Laws upon the great as well as little Offenders; to dispense Justice with an impartial Hand, without Regard to the Favour or Displeasure of the Mighty and the Honourable; to preserve the Rights both of the Sovereign and of the People; to maintain lawful Authority and lawful Liberty; to withstand the Encroachments both of Tyranny on the one Hand, and of Licentiousness and Sedition on the other.

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ANOTHER Qualification here requir'd in Magistrates is, that they be such as fear God. This Fear is grounded on due Apprehensions of the Divine Omniscience, Justice and Power. It is indeed necessary to all Christians whatsoever, because it is the Principle of every Religious Duty;

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Duty ; but it is necessary to Magistrates, consider'd not only in their private but in their publick Capacity, to excite their faithful Discharge of the Trust committed to them, and to restrain them from doing those Things which are incompatible with it. Nor can any stronger Restraint be laid upon Men in Power than this.

ABSOLUTE Governments, if they have sufficient Force on their Side, have nothing else to restrain them from those Outrages and Violences, to which Lust or Avarice or Ambition may tempt them, but the Dread of that Vengeance which sooner or later will certainly overtake those, who employ that Power to Destruction, which was given them to promote the Peace and Welfare of Mankind.

— Influenced by this Principle, the most unlimited and arbitrary Governours, how unaccountable soever they may be to their Fellow Creatures, will propose the Good of their People for the End of their Government, that they may not with Grief render an Account to One, who hath a more uncontrollable Power

over

over *them*, than they have over their Subjects,

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IN Governments well constituted, as *that* under which we have the Happiness to live, those who have the Execution of the Laws in their Hands, are themselves limited by the Laws. And subordinate Magistrates are subject to divers Penalties, if they do not keep themselves within the Bounds, and conform themselves to the Rules prescrib'd to them. And it must be confess'd that such a Provision as this, is a great Security to the Lives, Properties and Liberties of the Subjects. Even the Fear of temporal Penalties will have great Influence; but the Fear of everlasting Pains will undoubtedly have much greater; and consequently the Magistrate who fears a Divine Power, which can punish eternally, will be sensible of a stronger Impulse to a punctual Observation of the Rules of Justice than *he*, who fears only a superior Human Power, which can punish but for a Time.

BESIDES,

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BESIDES, Magistrates who fear only the Penalties threatned by Human Laws, may frequently be drawn aside from their Duty by the Hopes of Impunity. But the Fear of God will leave no Room for such Hopes. His Eyes are continually open upon all the Ways of Men; and He will one Day punish openly the most secret Acts of Injustice. *He*, who is higher than the highest upon Earth, and is armed with Almighty Power to vindicate the Honour of his Laws, will not hold guiltless the most mighty Offender.

IN Times of great Degeneracy and Corruption, the Magistrate may expect not only to go unpunish'd, but to be rewarded for transgressing his Duty. He may hope to be a Gainer by Acts of Injustice and Oppression. He may have a Prospect of raising himself by being instrumental to subvert the Constitution, and overthrow the Laws which it is his Province to uphold and execute. —

On these Occasions, *he* who acts only with a View to Things present and visible, will in all likelihood turn away his Eyes from

from those Ends which he ought ever to aim at, and prostitute his Authority to the basest and most mischievous Purposes.

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But *he* who stands in awe of an Invisible Almighty Monarch, at whose Tribunal he must account for every Abuse of Power, will be steady to his Duty in the worst of Times. He will rather forego a present Advantage how considerable soever, than act unsuitably to the Dignity of the Character he has the Honour to bear, by mis-employing the Authority committed to him. Because he is sensible that no worldly Gain can bear any Proportion to the Loss he shall sustain; no Honour he can arrive to, can equal the Shame which will hereafter be his Portion; no Pleasures he can enjoy, can compensate for the Torments which he shall be doom'd to, for his Misconduct and Unfaithfulness in his Office. The Hope of an imperfect and transitory Good will lose its Force, and be of no Weight with him, when over-ballanc'd with the Fear of insupportable Misery and Torment without end.

SOME-

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SOMETIMES the Magistrate may be in Danger of Suffering for a steady Adherence to his Duty. Blame and Ignominy may be the Consequence of a Behaviour, which deserves the highest Praise; an honest and equal Distribution of Justice, may expose him to the most injurious and cruel Usage. For protecting the Innocent, and delivering the Oppressed, he may himself be oppress'd and crush'd by others, who have more Regard to their own Power than to Right, and make their Will the Measure of their Conduct. *He* therefore who fears nothing but Man, or Man more than any thing else, will not be able to withstand the Violence of these Temptations. He will prefer Interest and Safety to Conscience, and save his Life and Estate at the Expence of his Integrity. Tho' he can refuse Offers most advantageous to himself, rather than do an Act of Unrighteousness to others; yet when he can no otherwise avoid suffering than by doing Wrong, the Fear of Suffering will shake him terribly, and move him from his Resolution. *He*, who
has

has no Apprehensions of what shall befall him in a future State for his Failures or Violations of Duty, will not care to sacrifice all that is dear to him in this Life, nor to fall a Martyr for Truth and Justice. ——— The only sure Way to overcome the Fear of Man, is to oppose to it the Fear of God. This will suggest to the Magistrate, that the Violation of his Duty must necessarily be attended with far more fatal Consequences than can ensue upon his Constancy and Perseverance in the Observation of it. That whereas God can easily deliver him from the Hands of Man, Man can by no means deliver him out of the Hands of God; to whose irresistible Power the united Forces of all created Beings are not to be compar'd. That the Inconveniencies which Men can bring upon him extend not beyond *this* Life, but the Punishments which God hath threatned will endure for evermore. Thus the Fear of a less Power will yield to the Fear of a greater, and the Dread of momentary Sufferings to the Dread of into-

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lerable

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 SERM. *terable and endless Torments; in com-*
 XV. *parison of which all the Evils that Men*
 — can inflict are as the small Dust of the
 Ballance.

WHEN *Moses*, in pursuance of *Jethro's* Advice and the Command of God, constituted Heads over the People, he deliver'd to them this Charge; *You shall not respect Persons in Judgment, You shall hear the Small as well as the Great. You shall not be afraid of the Face of Man, for the Judgment is God's. — Ye judge not for Man, said King Jehosopbat to his Judges, but for the Lord, who is with you in the Judgment. Wherefore now, let the Fear of the Lord be upon you. —* The Magistrate who bears in Mind that he is the Representative of God, and that when he sits upon the Tribunal he sits in the Seat of God, and judges for God himself, who tho' He be invisible is certainly present at the Judgment, and will hereafter judge the Magistrate himself; he who duly bears in Mind these Things, will not be over-awed by the Face of the greatest Person living to depart one Hairs breadth

breadth from the Rules of Justice. No
Fear of Disgrace, or of Loss, or Pain, or
of Death itself will prevail upon him to
render himself obnoxious to that righte-
ous and horrible Doom, to which he
knows he shall be obnoxious, if being
ordained to be the Minister of God, and
to judge for God, he shall presume in
God's Name, and in his Presence, and
under Colour of his Authority to pass an
unrighteous Sentence.

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TO FLESH and Blood it may seem a
hard Doctrine, that the Magistrate should
chuse to suffer, rather than do any thing
inconsistent with his Duty. But as hard
as this may appear to be, the Fear of
God will convince him that it is per-
fectly reasonable. Nothing in the World
is more certain; no Proposition in Mathe-
matics is more demonstrable than *this*,
That infinite Power is more to be dread-
ed than finite, and a greater Evil than
a less.

WHEN Magistrates enter upon their
Office, they usually oblige themselves
by a solemn Oath to a careful and faith-

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ful Discharge of their Duty. Governours cannot possibly tye themselves by a more sacred and indissoluble Bond than this. And therefore it is justly accounted a very strong and valuable Security to the Governed, that they shall be maintain'd in the Enjoyment of all those Benefits for the Procuring of which Societies were form'd, and Governments establish'd. Now the whole Force and Efficacy of Oaths to influence the Conscience and Conduct is intirely owing to the Fear of God. Where-ever this Fear is wanting, there can be no serious and sincere Regard paid to an Oath. *He* who stands in no Awe of the Deity by whom he swears, may possibly act according to his Oath, while it is safe and for his Interest so to do, or while he cannot do otherwise but at his Peril. But if there should happen a Conjunction, when he may act contrary to it with Safety and to Advantage, or when he cannot stand to it without certain Loss or great Hazard, he will make no Scruple to depart from it, because he is destitute of *that* Principle which

which alone can bind him to observe it.

— In every Promissory Oath, the Almighty and Omniscient God is either expressly or implicitly invoked, as a Witness to the Sincerity of the Swearer's Intention; and as an Avenger, if his Words are not agreeable to his Thoughts, and his Performances to his Engagements.

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To a Magistrate whose Mind is possess'd with the Fear of God, such an Obligation as this must at all Times and in all Circumstances appear inviolable. No Expectation either of Gain or Loss, of Honour or Dishonour, of Pleasure or Pain, of Life or Death, can induce him to break thro' it. He must be conscious to himself, that he shall be utterly without Excuse and have nothing to plead in Bar of eternal Vengeance, if he does not Religiously perform what he has promised to do, in the Presence of an Omnipotent God, and under Pain of his highest Displeasure. While these Terrors of Divine Judgment are upon him, they will greatly out-weigh all other

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Considerations. It is impossible but he should perceive, that by Perjury he cannot get so much as he shall lose; and that the Dangers hanging over his Head for falsifying his Oath, are far more terrible than any which may threaten him for being true to it. Wherefore it will always have its intended Effect upon him uniformly and invariably, which way soe'er his present Interest may lie.

A THIRD Qualification requir'd in Magistrates is, That they be Men of Truth; that in all their Conversation, and thro' the whole Course of their Government, they have a strict Regard to it; and in the Administration of Justice especially, make it the Ground and Measure of all their Proceedings. Justice, which is the main Pillar and Support of Society, is always agreeable to Truth, and founded upon it. If Truth be set aside, Justice must of Course fall to the Ground.—Truth often times lies deep, and the Discovery of it is no easy Matter. A due Concern for it will put the Magistrate upon searching after it, and endeavouring

endeavouring by the best Means in his Power to bring it to Light.— Common Rumour if credited will often mislead him. It frequently charges Men with Facts which they never did. It shews real Facts in a false and disadvantageous Light, representing indifferent and even innocent Actions as criminal, and blaming those which it ought to commend. He who is resolv'd to be guided by Truth only, will not lay much Stress upon meer Suspicions and Surmises. These may be a sufficient Ground for diligent Inquiry and Examination, but not for any final Determination. Conscience and Equity as well as the Laws require that Conviction should follow upon clear Proof, and not upon uncertain Conjectures; otherwise the most Innocent might suffer as Malefactors. Love of Truth will dispose those who are in Authority to Patience in their Enquiries, and to great Deliberation and Caution in Acting; it will prevent all rash and overhasty Proceedings, which are very commonly accompanied with Mistake. The Disco-

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very of Truth is sometimes owing to Time, after many fruitless Searches after it. — All Testimony is not alike credible. Many profligate and abandon'd Wretches will make no Conscience of testifying a Falshood. Private Animosities, Ill-will and Envy will dispose Persons not of the very worst Characters to credit and to report that Evil of others which is not true. Party Rage will not stick to defame and calumniate. They who are strongly addicted to any Faction, are too prone both to think and to say hard Things of those who differ from them; and to account *that* Proof satisfactory, when alledg'd against one in an opposite Interest, which would appear to them very slight, if brought against one in their own Sentiments — In these and the like Cases, the Magistrate who desires to be guided by Truth, will make all necessary Allowances, and will take all possible Care to guard against all Impositions. He will not lean to one Side more than to another, but will follow Truth on which Side soever he finds it.

And

And in all Cases he will be sure to divest himself of those Affections which may blind his Judgment, and hinder him from discerning the Truth. He will not suffer his own Prejudices to supply the Place of Evidence; but will be as ready to believe Good as Evil even of an Adversary; nor will he shew himself more forward to believe Evil of an Enemy than of a Friend. — In all Controversies he will suspend his Judgment, till he knows what is alledg'd on both Sides. He will hear the Small as well as the Great; and while the Accuser has one Ear, the Accused shall have the other. For Truth is easily disguis'd and misrepresented; and *he that is first in his own Cause seemeth just, till his Neighbour cometh and searcheth him.* Even the worst of Men have a Right to plead what they are able in their own Defence. And the best Man living may be made to appear very bad, if *all* that his Adversaries shall object to him be taken for granted, and he not permitted to answer for himself. — I shall only add under this Head, that

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that the Magistrate who is a Lover of Truth, will not fail to punish with the utmost Severity all false Testimony, all Suppression of Evidence, all Subornation and Corruption of Witnesses. Nothing can portend more pernicious Consequences to a Government than these Practices, if suffer'd to prevail. They are in themselves most flagrant Crimes, and will afford Protection and Encouragement to all other Crimes and Villanies; not those excepted which aim at the Subversion of the Government itself. Where they abound and are suffer'd to go unpunish'd, Life and Property must be very precarious, Innocency must be very insecure, and the most inoffensive, peaceable and just Persons will be an easy Prey to unconscionable Men, who by their Perjuries will turn the Edge of the Laws from themselves and their Associates upon those, whom, if the Truth of their Case was known, the Laws would support and favour. The

FOURTH and last Qualification which the Text requires in Magistrates is, that they

they be Men hating Covetousness, *i. e.* the inordinate Desire and Love of Riches.

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WITH good Reason does the Text require, that *they* who are entrusted with the Power of Judging should be free from a Temper of Mind, which will make them feel too sensibly the Force of those Temptations to Iniquity, which worldly Interest may sometimes ply them with. Nothing beyond Expectation would happen, if the Love of Mammon should prevail upon those, in whom it is the predominant Passion, to set Justice to Sale, and to accept the Wages of Unrighteousness. Greediness of Gain will prepare them for Receiving, and the receiving of Presents for the Wrestling of Judgment. When they have interested themselves in the Issue of a Controversy, it is great Odds but they will judge *that* to be Right which favours their Interest, and that which clashes with it to be Wrong. They will then see Things in a different Light, and under other Colours, than they would if they attended only to the Merits of the Cause. Even Persons of the best Under-

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Understanding, who would otherwise be ready to judge uprightly, will, when their Judgments are perverted by Bribes, be very liable to be misled, and to be turn'd aside out of the strait Paths of Justice. *Thou shalt take no Gift*, saith the Law of Moses, for a Gift blindeth the Eyes of the Wise, and perverteth the Words, i. e. the Sentence of the Righteous.—— This, I suppose, is the particular sort of Covetousness aim'd at in the Text. All who are in Authority, if they are desirous to preserve their Integrity and Reputation, will keep themselves at such a Distance from it, as, if possible, never to fall under the Suspicion of it. They will not only avoid it, but, as the Text directs, hate it; and, as they have Opportunity, manifest their Abhorrence of it.—— In many other Instances, which it would be tedious particularly to mention, Avarice will lead Magistrates to act beneath the Dignity, and contrary to the Duty of their Office.—— Now the great End for which Magistrates are ordain'd, is to serve Human Society. When

therefore they are more intent upon serving themselves than the Publick, they act out of Character, and unsuitably to the chief End of their Institution.

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A COVERTOUS Disposition is directly opposite to that Publick Spirit, by which Magistrates especially ought to distinguish themselves. This would set them above all narrow and selfish Views, and inspire them with a disinterested Zeal for the Common Good and Happiness. In pursuit of which they would gladly spend their Time, and sacrifice their Ease and Pleasure, and if need be their private Advantage to it. — Such Magistrates are Publick Blessings; and happy, if they know their Happiness, are those over whom they preside.

THAT this Nation may ever enjoy this Happiness, God Almighty grant for the Sake of his Son Jesus Christ our only Lord and Redeemer. *To whom, &c.*

S E R M.

S E R M O N XVI.

The Religious and Loyal Subjects Duty considered, with
 Regard to the present Government and the Revolution.

PROV. XXIV. 21.

*My Son, fear thou the Lord,
 and the King: and meddle
 not with them that are given
 to change.*

SERM. XVI. **T**HERE is no Need that I should
 acquaint any who are here present
 with the sad Occasion of this Anniversary
 Solemnity *; nor need I, I suppose, use
 many Words to raise in you a just Ab-
 horrence of that most execrable Parricide,
 which

* Martyrdom of King CHARLES I.

which we are now bewailing. To be sure we do all of us, from the very bottom of our Hearts, detest and abominate it; unless we have been all this while in this holy Place prevaricating with God and Man, and adding a feigned Humiliation to the Number of our former Provocations.

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As it ought to be the earnest Prayer and Endeavour of all good Men and loyal Subjects, that no such Wickedness may hereafter be committed among us, to the Reproach of our Nation, and of the holy Religion which we profess; so is it particularly incumbent on the Ministers of the Gospel, to press upon Men the due Observation of those Laws, which the Most High hath enacted for the Security and Support of his Vice-gerents on Earth; and to caution Men against those pernicious Principles and Practices, which in the last Age brought a most excellent and gracious Monarch to the Block; and quite overthrew our Constitution in Church and State: and which in all Ages, if a timely Stop be not put to them, will produce

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duce the like tragical Effects, as having a natural Tendency to subvert Government, and to introduce Anarchy and Confusion amongst Mankind.

FOR which Reason I have chosen for the Subject of my following Discourse, this solemn Charge of the wise King Solomon to his Son; *My Son, fear thou the Lord and the King: and meddle not with them that are given to change.* In which Words are bound upon us three Rules of Life, very necessary to be observed by all who would not be deemed Enemies to the publick Peace and Tranquility.

THE first is, *To fear the Lord.*

THE second is, *To fear the King.*

THE third is, *Not to meddle with those that are given to change.*

OF each of these Injunctions I shall discourse in Order, and shall shew in what Latitude, and with what Restrictions they are to be understood; how highly reasonable they are, and of how great Importance to the Preservation of Human Society, and the Maintenance of the Magistrates Authority.

THE

THE Fear of God is a Duty equally obliging Persons of all Ranks and Conditions, at all Times, and in all Places; and in its full Extent comprehends all other Duties. It has for its Foundation, all the glorious Attributes and Perfections of God; but more especially his Omniscience, his Holiness, his Justice, and his Almighty Power. For they who are firmly persuaded, that all their Actions, and Words, and Thoughts, are open to the View of the Deity; that *he is of purer Eyes than to behold Evil with Approbation, and cannot endure to look on Iniquity*; that He will one Day judge all Men in Righteousness according to their Works; and that the united Force of all the Creatures of the Universe cannot hinder Him from executing the terrible Sentence which He shall then pass upon the Transgressors of his Laws; they who do, in good Earnest, believe these Things to be true, and frequently and seriously consider them, will of Course be very careful not to incur the Displeasure of the Almighty, by doing those Things which He hath forbidden, or

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by neglecting to do what He hath commanded. Hence, in Scripture, the Fear of God is often used to signify the Whole of Religion : Because in all who live under the Influence of it, it is a very powerful Principle of constant and uniform Obedience to the Divine Laws.

THE Fear of the King too comprehends the whole Duty of a Subject to his Sovereign. To fear the King is, to yield to him that Homage, and Submission, and Obedience, which the Laws of God, and of the Land, do require : Chearfully to contribute towards the supporting his Royal Honour and Dignity, and the supplying the Necessities of the State ; to labour every one of us in our own Sphere to defeat the Expectations and Contrivances of his Enemies, and to promote the Peace of his Government, and the Success of his Designs ; and continually to pray to Him who disposeth of all Events, to protect his Person, to direct his Counsels, and prosper his Undertakings ; to demean our selves towards him with profound Reverence, to speak honourably

rably of him, to think of him with Awe, to entertain the most favourable Opinion of his Character, and to put the best Construction upon his Actions; and finally, to render due Honour and Obedience to all inferior Magistrates and Officers, who act by his Commission, and in Subordination to Him.

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THE Reasonableness and Necessity of all this, will appear by shewing, that nothing less than this, will fully answer the Ends of Government; and that the contrary Practices are very injurious to the Authority of Princes, and do tend to the Disturbance and Dissolution of Society.

GOVERNMENT it is clear cannot subsist, where there are none who will submit to be governed, and own their Dependance upon their Governours: There can be no Sovereign, where there are no Subjects; no Commanders, where none will obey.

To call any one King, and at the same Time to rebel against his Authority, what is this but to mock him with an

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empty Title? And it is nearly the same Case, when Subjects, though they do not take up Arms against their Sovereign, do withdraw from him those Supplies without which his Government cannot be upheld.

IN the natural Body all the Members, even those which are esteemed the most ignoble and inconsiderable, do their Office for the Preservation and Well-being of the Whole: And in the political it is as fitting that all the Members, even those which are in a private Station, should, as their Circumstances will allow them, exert themselves for the Security and Prosperity of the whole Community. The Protection which the Authority of the Magistrate affords to all, lays an Obligation upon all to unite in the Defence of it against the Attempts of its Enemies, which sometimes can no otherwise be repelled than by the united Endeavours of all. It gives great Encouragement to the Adversaries of a State to observe, that those who do not side with them, are not very hearty and diligent against them.

The

The Government that is negligently defended, will quickly be vigorously assaulted; and with too great Probability of Success, when even its Friends shew no other Mark of Friendship to it, than the forbearing to join with its Enemies.

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THE Obstructions and Difficulties with which the Management of the publick Affairs is necessarily attended, are so many and so great, that the Sovereign has need of all the Assistance his Subjects can lend him for the removing them. Should they industriously lay unnecessary ones in his Way, his Designs for their Safety and Benefit, must in all likelihood miscarry.

THEY who can be helpful no other Way, have surely great Reason to solicit Heaven, to guard, and guide, and assist those who are continually watching for their Welfare. And since without the Divine Aid all human Counsels and Labours are vain; they who can be most serviceable to their Sovereign by their Wisdom, or Valour, or Treasure, must by no Means think themselves excused

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from assisting him by their earnest and constant Prayers. And if those, who barely omit this Duty, are not to be accounted good Subjects; they are certainly very bad ones, who dare to imprecate the Judgments of Heaven upon their Governours.

IRREVERENT Carriage to the Person of the Prince, and the speaking contemptuously and dishonourably of him, have a direct Tendency to lessen his People's Veneration for him, which is a main Prop of his Government. The speaking Evil of Princes, is commonly a Prelude to some Attempt against them; it being found by Experience, that the Way to weaken and undermine their Authority, is to blast their Reputation. Many perhaps, who are instrumental in spreading scandalous Reports of their Governours, have no such wicked Intention; but if they have not, they are certainly very serviceable to those that have; nor are they to be excus'd who listen and give Credit to them. Such, tho' at present they are not active in carrying on any traiterous Designs, yet give
Grounds

Grounds to hope that they may be wrought upon, and in Time made fit for Purposes, to which, as yet, they are Strangers. When once Men have cast off all inward Awe of their Prince, and have given Entertainment to an ill Opinion of him, they are then very much exposed to the Attacks of discontented and factious Persons.

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BEFORE Subjects credit evil Reports of their Prince, they ought to consider that it is the Employment of many, to render him either contemptible or odious to his People: That to this End many false Things are laid to his Charge, his real Defects and Miscarriages are very much magnified; the ill Success of his Undertakings is charged upon his Mismanagement, tho' perhaps no Diligence nor Vigilance, nor Providence (so far as it is in Man's Power to provide against Contingencies) was wanting on his Part; and his very best Desigus, laid and conducted with the greatest Wisdom, and perfected with all desirable Success, are represented as prejudicial and pernicious

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to the Common-weal. And they who can suffer their Affections to be by those Means alienated from their present Sovereign, will not be long pleased with any: Nor can any Government be quiet, or secure, where these Artifices are practised with Success.

THE Authority of the supreme Magistrate must of Necessity be exercised by many subordinate Officers: And to dishonour or disobey these, is, in Effect, to dishonour and disobey him, by whose Commission they act. And tho' it be for the Interest of the Publick, that they should account for wilful Abuses of the Power committed to them; yet all unreasonable Clamours against them, are of dangerous Consequence to the Government, and do indeed threaten the Sovereign himself, who may be mortally wounded thro' the Sides of his Ministers.

It has been before observed, that the Laws of God, and of the Land, are the Measures of Submission and Obedience to the King. Wherefore no one ought, from what has been now said, to infer,
that

that in limited Monarchies, where Part of the legislative Authority is lodged in the Body of the People, the Subjects are obliged to obey any Edicts of the Prince not agreeable to the Laws enacted by the whole Legislature. In this Case, since the Power of the People is so far coordinate with that of the Prince, that without them no new Laws can be enacted, nor former Laws abrogated; they may justly require to be governed by the Laws made with their own Consent, and by no other. And should this Right of the People be set aside, and no Redress obtained upon their humble Petitions and Representations; the Prince must take to himself the Blame, if they have Recourse to other Means absolutely necessary for the Preservation of their Constitution. On the other Hand, it is incumbent on the People to see, that their Grievances are real, and not pretended; that their Complaints are founded not upon meer Surmises and Jealousies, but upon notorious Facts; and that while they are asserting their own Right, they do not invade that of their

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Sovereign, nor make any thing Matter of Demand, but the restoring and securing to them what is their Due, by Laws already established.

MOREOVER, since God is the supreme Monarch of the Universe, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; since his Power alone is unlimited and irresistible; and by Consequence the primary and most proper Object of Men's Fear; it is manifest, that no human Laws whatsoever, can bind Men to act contrary to the Divine. Nothing can be more unreasonable, than to obey God's Vice-gerent in Opposition to God himself, and to suffer the Fear of a less Power, to prevail against the Fear of a greater. The Text teaches us, in the first Place, *to fear the Lord*, and then *the King*. Should the King command not to fear the Lord, it is better to endure all that he can inflict, than to do what he commands. We are indeed commanded *to render to Cæsar the Things that are Cæsars*; but we cannot without Impiety withhold from God *the Things that are God's*, that we may render to Cæsar more

Mat. xxii.
21.

more than is his due. The Apostles, when they were reprimanded by the High-Priest for not obeying the Charge given them by the *Sanhedrim*, to teach no more in the Name of Jesus, answered plainly, That they *ought to obey God* Acts v. *rather than Man.* And a Disciple of ^{29.}

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St. *John* being brought before the Magistrate for Christ's Name sake, answered to the same purpose; “* We are taught
“ to pay to the Powers and Authorities
“ ordained of God, all due Honour, ex-
“ cepting such only as would be hurtful
“ to us.” For to Christians, that Honour and Obedience must needs appear hurtful, which, tho’ it may skreen them from the Displeasure of an earthly Governour, who can kill the Body only, will draw upon them the Wrath of God, who can destroy both Body and Soul in Hell.

BUT tho’ the Fear of God must, in case of Competition, take Place, before the Fear of the King; yet ought it not to be made a Pretence for refusing to render to the King the Fear which is owing

* Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. 4. cap. 18.

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ing to him. The Fear of God is so far from releasing Subjects from their Duty to their Prince, that it is the surest Ground of it, and the strongest Motive to it. For since the King is the Minister of God; they who do indeed fear God, will of course fear him who is in the Place of God, and acts by Authority derived from Him. And whatsoever Honour or Service they are to yield to him, they will yield it heartily, not as to a Man, but as to Him whom he represents, the All-seeing and All-powerful God.

To such Men human Laws have a much stronger Sanction, than the Penalties annexed to the Violation of them by the Legislature. They are subject for fear, not only of the Magistrates Wrath, but of that everlasting Punishment, which God will inflict upon all who will not submit to the Powers ordained by Him.

THE firmest and most inviolable Engagement by which Subjects can oblige themselves to be faithful to a Government, is a solemn Oath, which is render'd effectual to its End by the Fear of
God,

God, who is therein invocated as a Witness to the Sincerity of the Swearer's Intention, and as the Avenger of his Perfidiousness should he break through so sacred a Tye.

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BUT to those who have no Awe of this Omniscient Witness, no Dread of this Almighty Avenger, no Oaths will be binding any longer than they are agreeable to their Inclination. And it will be their Inclination to do every thing with a View to worldly Advantages. The Ground and Measure of their Obedience to the Prince, will be their secular Interest; the Variation of which will be apt to produce an answerable Change in the Conduct. For they will have no Motive to Loyalty left, when they may turn Rebels with Impunity, and be Gainers by an Alteration of Government.

BUT the Fear of God being always the same, is a very steady Principle of Loyalty. It secures the Obedience of Subjects in many Cases, where the Laws either do not reach them, or cannot be executed upon them; and keeps them

true

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true to the Interest of their Sovereign, when other Considerations might induce them to betray or desert it. Even they who would persuade us that there is no such Being as God, or if there be, that He observes not what passes here below, cannot but own that the Fear of Him is a Principle very friendly to Government, and of great Use to dispose Men to be peaceable and submissive to those who are in Authority.

1 Pet. ii.
13.

THE more inexcusable were the Actors in this Day's horrid Tragedy, who made the Fear of God the Cloak of Treason; and in direct Contradiction to the Precept of *St. Peter*, set themselves to resist every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's Sake, turning Faith into Faction, and Religion into Rebellion: who under a specious Pretext of reforming the Church, filled their native Country with Blood and Desolation, trampled upon its Laws, and triumphed in the Ruin of its Constitution: who fasted and prayed, not for the Safety of the King, and all that were in Authority, that under them they might lead a
quiet

quiet and peaceable Life in all Godliness and Honesty; but for Strife and Debate, and to stir up Sedition and Insurrection against those whom God had set over them: who, professing a mighty Reverence for the Divine Majesty, rushed upon the most abominable Perjuries; first of all violating the Oaths which they had taken to the King and established Government, by entering into illegal Covenants and Engagements, and illegally imposing them upon others; and then breaking loose from these also, when they were no longer for their Turn: who, with a Shew of more than ordinary Sanctity and Concern for the Honour of God, practised all the diabolical Arts of Defamation and Calumny against his Image and Representative; and not contented with slandering the Footsteps of the Lord's Anointed, and blackening his Character, deprived him of his royal Dignity, barbarously insulted his sacred Person, and at length imbrued their Hands in the Blood of a King, who was an illustrious Example to his Subjects of genuine

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genuine Piety and Sobriety, and Meekness and Patience, and all other Christian Vertues: who lastly proceeded to this high Pitch of Disloyalty and Impiety, when all Grievances had been long ago redressed, and the King had passed such Acts, as will be everlasting Monuments of his fatherly Affection and Tenderness for his People; when he had to the great Prejudice of his own Interests granted several Things, which his Subjects could not with Justice demand, nor ask with any degree of Modesty; nay, when he had consented to part with the best and most considerable Branches of his royal Authority, and to leave to himself little more than the Title of a King: in doing which, as he went beyond the Example of his Predecessors, so it is to be hoped he will never be followed by any of his Successors.

BUT tho' the Fear of God was the pretended Inducement to all these Villanies; yet nothing can be more certain than that they are truly to be ascribed to the want of it. Wherefore none ought

to cast off a Principle absolutely necessary ———
 to the very Being of Government, meerly SERM.
 because the external Profession of it has XVI.
 been abused to the worst Purposes by
 crafty and ill-designing Men, who were
 destitute of the inward Power of it. On
 the contrary, it is our Duty not to let it
 rest upon the Surface of our Tongues,
 but to give it Admittance into our Breasts,
 and to implant it deeply in our Hearts;
 and then it will not fail to bring forth the
 Fruits of Peaceableness and Submission, of
 Obedience and Loyalty to the Govern-
 ment under which the merciful Providence
 of Almighty God hath placed us; and to
 restrain us from all seditious and traite-
 rous Practices, and from all Approaches
 towards them. For they who would
 avoid any Crime, must be careful to
 avoid the Steps that lead to it. For which
 Reason the wise King, to keep his Son
 from engaging in Designs against the
 State, directs him not to meddle with
 Changers, or, according to our Trans-
 lation, *with them that are given to*
change.

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IN which Direction, it was not the Intention of King *Solomon*, to condemn all Changes in the Laws and Government of a Kingdom. The supreme Power, which in every independent State is lodged somewhere or other, manifestly implies a Power to make such Alterations as shall from Time to Time be judg'd convenient and advantageous. And in the different Circumstances of the publick Affairs, some Changes in the Laws will be often necessary, or very expedient; and when they are made by sufficient Authority, it is without Controversy the Duty of Subjects to submit to them. And even private Persons, when the present Laws of their Country are very inconvenient and prejudicial to the Interests of the People, may lawfully desire an Alteration of them, and may commendably endeavour to effect it in a Legal manner, by making humble and dutiful Application to those who are vested with the legislative Power.

BUT they are Changers in the bad Sense of the Word, who go about to change the Laws and settled Government

of

of a Nation, without the Consent of those who have Authority to do it ; or who by illegal and violent Methods endeavour to extort the Consent of their Governours to such Alterations as they shall propose ; as by Clamours and Menaces and tumultuous Assemblies ; by forming secret Conspiracies, or by openly bearing Arms against their Sovereign, and by entering into Covenants, not to lay down their Arms till they have obtained their unjust Demands. They too, who by any kind of disloyal Behaviour, or seditious Discourse, manifest their Aversion to the established Government, may with Reason be suspected of being given to change ; altho' it be not yet their avowed Design to effect a Change.

By forbidding us to meddle with them that are given to change, King *Solomon* would restrain us, not only from acting in Concert with them, and assisting them in carrying on their mischievous Designs, but also from engaging in Friendship and Familiarity, or any unnecessary Correspondence with them.

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It is no easy matter to converse much with Men of a factious and turbulent Spirit, without being infected by them. The best way to preserve ourselves, both from their Crime and their Punishment, is to keep at a distance from them. And this I take to be the true Meaning of the wise Man's Advice in the 22d Chapter of this Book of *Proverbs*, at the 24th and 25th Verses, *Make no Friendship with an angry Man, and with a furious Man thou shalt not go. Lest thou learn his Ways, and get a Snare to thy Soul.* By often hearkening to the plausible Discourses of seditious Persons, utter'd with a seeming Concern for the publick Welfare, many come at length to approve of them, and highly to esteem those who make them, for their great Understanding, and Honesty, and disinterested Zeal for the Good of their Country; and to believe that their Governours are not so Good as they ought to be, and that some Changes for the better are both possible and needful. And they who have got thus far, will be too apt to be prevailed upon, to take
some

some unlawful Steps towards the Reforming of supposed Disorders, without imagining what Purposes they are serving, and how far their Leaders intend to carry them. And when Men are once engaged, they themselves cannot tell where they shall stop. One Wickedness may introduce them to another, till they become principal Actors in the Execution of Designs, with which they could not have been safely trusted at their first setting out.

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PUT the Case, That the main Secret when revealed to them should displease them; yet after a considerable Progress in unlawful Courses, it will be very difficult for them to retreat. The Shame of acknowledging themselves to have been in the Wrong, the Apprehension of being reproached for deserting their Companions, and the Fear of suffering Punishment for having accompanied them so far, will be strong Temptations to them to proceed farther against the Bent of their own Inclinations, and the Convictions of their Consciences.

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SHOULD they, notwithstanding their Temptations to the contrary, resolve to be no longer directed by those who misled them, yet what they have already done, may have Consequences fatal to the Publick. By their Assistance, the Enemies of the Government may be strong enough to compass their Ends, not only without their farther Concurrence, but in spite of all the Opposition they can make. And it will then be a mortifying Consideration to reflect, that they have been accessary to Villanies which they abhor, of which however they must be content to bear the Blame. The criminal Assistance which they gave to Men worse than themselves, will entitle them to a Share in their Guilt, and they will be in some measure answerable for the unforeseen Consequences of their unlawful Practices.

AND yet the best and honestest Thing which Persons thus entangled can do, is to get rid of their bad Company as soon as possible; to be sorry for what Mischief they have already done; and to endeavour
by

by their future Conduct, to make Reparation for it. And the Design of what has been now said, was not to discourage any from forbearing to meddle any longer with them that are given to change, but to persuade all who are as yet innocent, never to meddle with them at all, but industriously to avoid them; not to pass by their Path, but to *turn from them and pass away*. For they sleep not, except they have done Mischief, and their Sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall. Wherefore they cannot be too diligently guarded against, by those who would preserve themselves not only from Guilt, but from Trouble and Perplexity and Ignominy, and from that Calamity and Ruin, which (as we are informed by the Verse following my Text) *shall come suddenly upon them that are given to change, and upon those who meddle with them*.

THE unparallel'd Treason committed on this Day, and all the Confusions and Miseries preceding it, and consequent upon it, may justly be ascribed to the Neglect of this most necessary Caution. In-

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— deed it can hardly be doubted, but that
— from the Beginning of those unhappy
— Troubles, or very soon after, there was
— a Party of desperate Men, who had in
View the utter Subversion of the estab-
lish'd Government, and were resolved
to stick at no Villany that might conduce
to the accomplishing their End. But
their Numbers in those early-Days, were
much too small to bring about the Change
they aim'd at, or even to protect them
from the just Vengeance which the Na-
tion would certainly have taken upon
them, had they then dar'd to own their
Intentions. Wherefore they found it
necessary to cover their real Designs, un-
der the specious Pretences of remedying
Abuses, and securing the Liberties of the
People, and rectifying what was amiss
both in Church and State.

By this Artifice multitudes of undiscerning and unwary People were drawn into their Assistance, and to a criminal Union with them, and when these Instruments of theirs had for a considerable time been accustomed to traduce the King

and

and his Ministers, exceedingly to aggravate the Errors they had committed, and to charge them with odious Designs, which they knew nothing of, to brand all who honestly adher'd to the King and the antient Constitution with Names and Characters of Reproach, and to terrify them not only by Threatnings, but by Outrages and Tumults; when they had broken forth into open Rebellion against their Sovereign, and in Contradiction to the lawful Oaths which they were under to him, had bound themselves by unlawful Covenants and Associations, not to rest till they had compelled him to comply with such Alterations as they judged expedient; when they had laid waste their Country, and shed much Christian Blood in their unjust Quarrel, and had several times rejected the gracious Overtures of Peace made to them by the King, when by these Means the Breach between him and them was so widen'd, that it was hardly possible to compose it upon Conditions safe and honourable to them both; when by long Familiarity
with

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with Disloyalty and Treason, the Consciences of great Numbers of Men were harden'd, and grown perfectly insensible; and when the Enemies of the King had got into their Hands the whole Power of the Nation, and his Friends could no longer make head against them; then was it a proper Time for the Contrivers and Directors of all this Mischief, to discover to those who had been subservient to them their true Designs against the Person and Government of the King. And doubtless there were many concurring and assisting to the monstrous Wickedness, the Punishment of which we to this Day deprecate, who, had it been propos'd to them some Years before, would have been struck with Horror at the mention of it, and who could no otherwise have been made capable of committing it, than by being artfully trailed on, Step by Step, from the meddling with them that are given to change, to the becoming such themselves, from one Perjury to another Perjury, and from less Treasons to greater.

It is true too, that many who had been active, both in kindling and prosecuting the War, were startled at the unprecedented Proceedings against the Person of the King, and publicly express'd their dislike of them. But fruitless Protestations were but pitiful Compensations for the successful Services they had done to his Murtherers, whom they had continued to assist and strengthen, till it was to no purpose to make Opposition to them. It was then out of their Power to undo the Mischiefs which they had been the Authors of, or to hinder others from making a farther Use of them, than they themselves had intended. Thus were they unawares made instrumental to the shedding the innocent and sacred Blood of their Sovereign; the Guilt of which horrible Deed must be imputed not only to those who were immediately concerned in it, and consenting to it, but in a lower Degree to those also, who made Way for it, by the unwarrantable Practices, which have been already mentioned.

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THE greater Reason have we, Brethren, to be exceeding careful not to tread in their Steps, lest we also fall in like manner as they fell. Their Miscarriages are our Admonitions, and we shall be more inexcusable than they, if instead of taking Warning by them, we follow their Example.

I AM sensible it will be said, That we do imitate them, at the same time that we blame them; That the Prayers which we have now offered for the averting the Divine Wrath due to the Sin of this Day, and for the Safety and Prosperity of our present gracious Sovereign, are a Contradiction to one another; and, That the late Revolution was a return to the Principles of those who were concerned in the great Rebellion: And there are two sorts of Men, who, tho' opposite enough to each other, will be apt to concur in making this Objection; the one with a Design to justify the Murther of the Royal Martyr, or at least the Measures which prepared the Way for it; The other with an Intention to condemn the
happy

happy Revolution, upon which our present Settlement is founded:

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Now, to what hath been already observed, with a View to this Objection, I need only to add, That these two Cases, which some would fain have us believe to be nearly alike, are widely different.

It is well known, that the Rebellion against King *Charles* the First was begun, when all Grievances (which in his Reign were far from amounting to a total Subversion of the Constitution) had been fully redressed and repaired. And it was the declared Resolution of those who engaged in it, not to defend, but to change the Laws and settled Form of Government, and to encroach upon the just Rights of their Sovereign; who laboured indefatigably to maintain the established Laws and Government; who by the Laws, to which he had without Compulsion consented, had given sufficient Proof, that he was as willing to secure his Peoples Rights as his own; and who was so far from affecting Power,
that

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that did not belong to him, that his greatest Weakness was, that he did not hold fast the Reins of Government in his Hands, but parted with his Authority too easily, and made too large Concessions to those who were not disposed to make him suitable returns. When the Rebels had got the Mastery, they then actually compleated a far greater Change than they had at first professed to desire. A high Court of Justice was erected for the Judging and Condemning the King himself as a Criminal; the whole Royal Family were excluded from succeeding to the Crown; and Kingly Government itself was declared against and abolished and several illegal Forms of Government were one after another set up in the room of it.

BUT in the Reign of the late King *James*, no Redress of Grievances, no opportunity of Redressing them in a Parliamentary Way could be obtained. Instead of being removed, they were justified, by pretending that the King had a Power to dispense with the Laws
at

at Pleasure. And it was very visible, that the King and his Ministers governed by this pernicious and tyrannical Maxim.

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Now this was plainly a Subversion of the Constitution, by changing the Government from limited to absolute, from legal to arbitrary. When the Power of the People prevailed, they made it very evident, that the Motive to the Measures they had then taken was Necessity, and not the being given to Change. No Remedy was so much as sought for against the Person of the King. No Prejudice was manifested against the illustrious Family, which had long sway'd the Scepter of these Kingdoms; but all possible Regard was shewn to it. The King himself had render'd the setting of the Crown upon a Person who now pretends to it impracticable, tho' the Nation had been ever so well satisfied concerning his Birth. But it was immediately settled upon the King's undoubted Issue then in the Kingdom, and upon a Grandson of the Royal Martyr; and afterwards, in default of the Issue from them, upon the next Branch

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Branch of the Royal Family professing the Protestant Religion, with whom alone our Constitution could with any Prospect of Security be entrusted. Nor was there any Invasion of the Royal Prerogative, but the same Government in Church and State was chearfully submitted to by the People; as on the other hand the Liberties of the People were faithfully defended by the Crown. In short, of two Changes, one of which was at that Time unavoidable, the Nation preferred the less to the greater, and that which was safe and advantageous to that which would have been very disadvantageous and destructive.

WHICH Things considered, no Man should offer to draw a Parallel betwixt the late Revolution and the great Rebellion, till he is able to demonstrate, That there is no Difference between the doing no manner of Hurt to the Person of the King, and the Executing him publickly as a Malefactor; Between the Settling the Crown upon his undoubted Issue, and Excluding the whole Royal Family from

it, without any other Necessity than what arose from the Guilt of those who excluded them; Between the Peoples asserting their own undoubted Rights, and their invading the undoubted Rights of their Sovereign; Between insisting upon the regular Observation and Execution of the established Laws, and fighting for an Alteration of them; Between preserving the ancient Constitution, and utterly overthrowing it from the Foundations; or, in other Words, Between Just and Unjust; Between Right and Wrong.

WHEREFORE, Brethren, let us stop our Ears against those, whose Doctrines open a Door to Disobedience and Rebellion against lawful Authority; and no less against those also who would insinuate that our present Governours have no Claim to the Submission, which they acknowledge to be due to lawful Magistrates. The Powers which now are, are ordained of God; and ordained in Mercy to us, for the Security of our Lives and Properties and Liberties, and of what we ought to value above all the rest, our

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most Holy Religion. And heavy will be the Condemnation of those, who shall refuse to submit to him who is the Minister of God to them for Good.

LET us therefore, laying aside all Pride and Contentions, all Jealousies and Discontents, set ourselves to perform what we know to be our Duty to him, who is vested with the Authority of God: not with Eye-service as Men-Pleasers, not with Murmurings as of Necessity, but in singleness of Heart and with a ready Mind, as in the Sight of God, as having his Fear before our Eyes, and remembering that He will bring us to a strict Account, not only for the Sins committed immediately against Himself, but for every Offence against his Substitute, who by Him reigns, and decrees Justice.

IF we dread not the Penalties of human Laws, yet let us revere the Ordinance of God. Let us consider by whom we have sworn; and let the Apprehension of Destruction from him be a Terror to us. If there be any who dare bid De-
fiance

france to that; let us mark such, and turn away from them. Let us not be so weak as to imagine, that they can have any real Concern for Religion, or the Interest of their Country, who can prevail with themselves, or would prevail with others, to violate the Oath of God. We cannot surely be at a loss to conclude, what kind of Spirits have taken Possession of those Men, who are not to be bound, no not with Chains; who break in funder the strongest Bonds of Government, and cast away its Cords from them.

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LET our Behaviour be suitable to our Professions on this solemn Day of Humiliation. If we do indeed detest the Crimes of those cruel and unreasonable Men, who gave Occasion for the Observance of it; If we would not for the World be the Authors of such dreadful Calamities as they by a long Train of Wickedness brought upon their Nation; If we are sincere in imploring the Mercy of God, that He would not visit their Guilt upon us or our Posterity: let us take heed that we do not fill up the mea-

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sure of their Iniquities by a Repetition of them; let us not cherish the Seeds which are apt to produce such bitter and dreadful Fruits; let us not enter upon Courses, which, for ought we know, may end in the Crimes we detest.

To conclude, Let us not separate what God hath joyned together, Religion and Loyalty, the Fear of God and of the King. Let us esteem Loyalty as a necessary Part of Religion, and assure ourselves that we are doing God acceptable Service while we are serving his Representative. Let Loyalty to the King mingle itself with our most solemn Acts of Divine Worship. In our Thanksgivings let us devoutly acknowledge the many Blessings we enjoy under his Government: and in Return, let us by our Prayers draw down the choicest Blessings of Heaven upon him; most earnestly beseeching the Almighty to enrich him plenteously with Grace here, and crown him with everlasting Glory hereafter; To prolong his Life in Health and Wealth, and to perpetuate his Seed as the Days

of

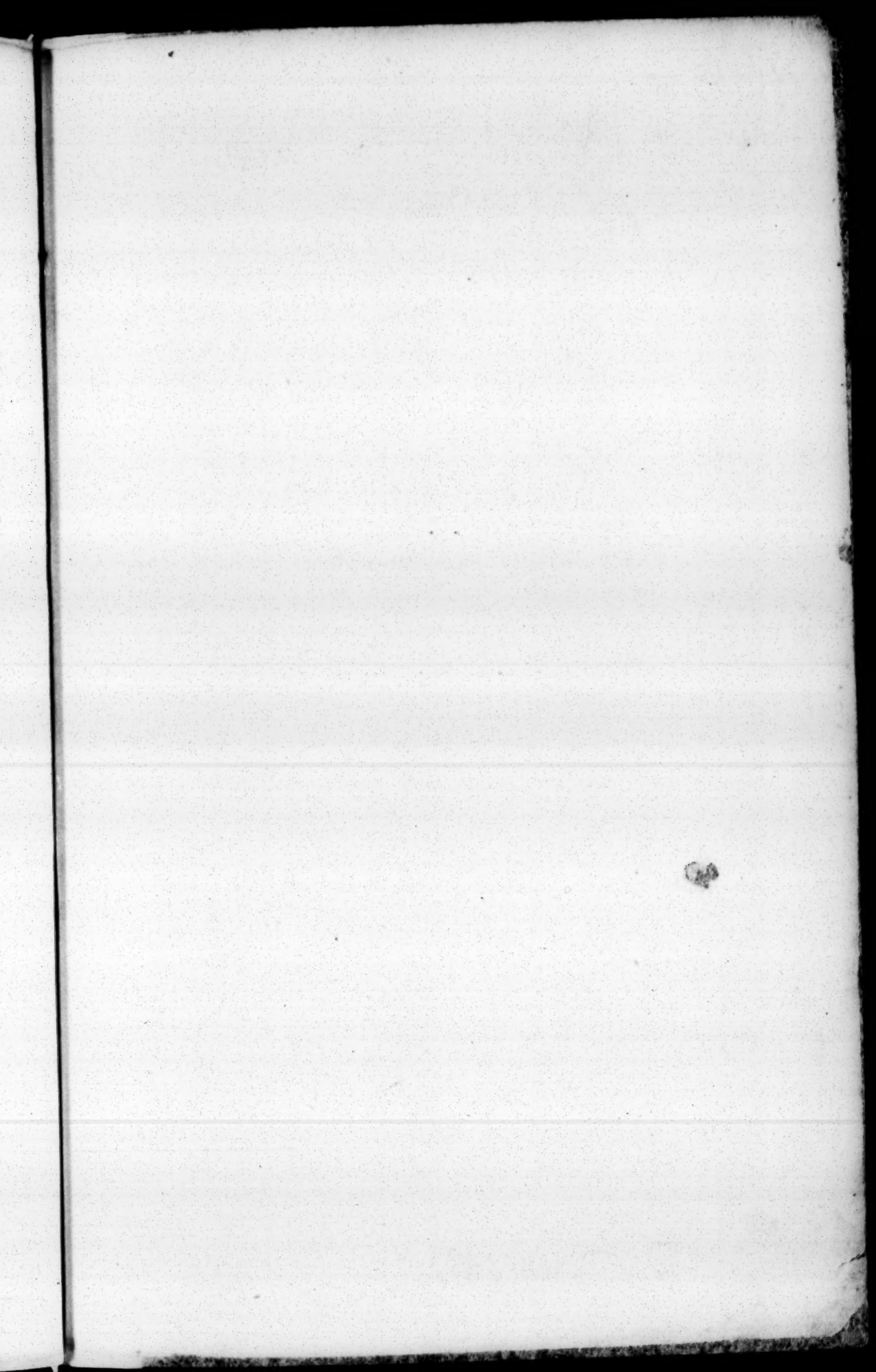
of Heaven; To guide him with his Spirit
of Council, and to strengthen him with
his mighty Arm, for the Establishment
of Truth, and the Maintenance of Justice,
both at Home and Abroad; To hide him
in Time of Danger under the Covert of
his Wings; and to shield him with his
strong Salvation; That the Conspiracies
formed against him may not prosper, and
the Devices of wicked Men may be tur-
ned backwards and light upon their own
Heads; That all the People may hear
and fear to do wickedly, and the Crown
may flourish upon the Head of the
Lord's Anointed.

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